

navigation of the Thames. The best thing that can be done for young watermen is to encourage them to row in races, and money can hardly be applied better than in augmenting the funds at the disposal of the managers of this regatta. The perfection of rowing as an amusement depends upon the existence of a class of men to whom rowing is a business, and if we want men like Phelps or Kelley, we must offer them some encouragement to come into existence. Therefore it is hoped that those who are most interested in the Oxford-Harvard race will give a thought to the Thames Regatta.

But to return to our immediate subject, we can hardly exaggerate the importance which is to be attached to this visit of the Harvard crew to England. They are the representatives of a university which bears in its system of education a close resemblance to our own. The town of Cambridge in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, received its name after the foundation of Harvard College in compliment to the University of Cambridge. The new Cambridge still so far resembles the old that its students apply themselves to classics and mathematics, they wear caps and gowns, and they maintain a boat club. We are so much accustomed to expect novelty in America that we hear with something like surprise that the old ways of education are still pursued at Harvard College. We believe that Latin and Greek composition, at least in prose, receives considerable attention, and we know that there is a college chapel, at which however students are not obliged to appear, as they have the option of going to any other place of worship which they may prefer. As regards boating facilities, Harvard is very differently placed from our own Universities, as the town of Cambridge is only three miles from Boston, from which it is divided by an arm of the sea called the Charles River. The practice of the Harvard men in rowing must, therefore, have been mostly taken upon salt water and a tidal stream. They had much to learn when they came to England, and, indeed, they brought with them little except a familiarity with hard heavy work, and that ready intelligence which has enabled their countrymen to make so great a figure in the world. They possess the boldness which carries men into new positions, and the mental and bodily vigour which often produces success in them:—

He either fears his fate too much,  
Or his desert is small,  
Who fears to put it to the proof,  
To gain or lose it all.

The words of the chivalrous Montrose might well be taken as a motto by these sons of republican New England. To challenge Oxford at her own weapons and on her own ground was an enterprise of the same quality as that of the men of Boston who entrenched themselves on the hills which look down on the Charles River, and, hoping to supply the want of discipline by patriotic ardour, awaited there the onset of the army of the English Crown. That army had courage, the tradition of many victories, and the habit, acquired by years of patient practice on the drill-ground, of doing without any distinct effort of volition exactly that which its commanders deemed necessary to produce a desired result. The opponents of that army had courage, and the hope of fame, and they sought to supply discipline by enthusiasm. The American crew have hoisted the flag of "H. B. C." at Putney with something of the same spirit which dug the trenches on Bunker's Hill—a spirit which teaches them in whom it dwells to venture always and to win often. The Harvard crew have been perhaps a good deal bored by the close inspection to which their aquatic performances at Putney have been subjected. But they may be assured that they have suffered only under the manifestations of a friendly intent. They are enough of sportsmen to understand the anxiety of the British public to see how they go. The English newspapers have freely and perhaps hastily criticized their daily work, but the strongest sentiment in the spectators has been that of admiration for the boldness with which they have made this match, and the quiet and thoroughly determined manner in which they have prepared themselves to play it. If they win the match which they have now in hand, we will hope that it may not be their only one on English waters. We are greatly mistaken if they have not used their eyes as well as their limbs at Putney, and we should expect that another month's practice would make them very troublesome customers indeed. We will venture to make only one remark upon the appearance of the crew, and it is that they strikingly exhibit that combination of English with other and widely different characteristics which is exhibited by the great nation whose representatives they are. Our American friends will not be offended if we say that to our mind the best oar in the Harvard boat is most like an Englishman, and might be most readily taken to belong to the old instead of the new Cambridge, or rather perhaps to the old Cambridge when it was not quite so old as to be unable to win a boat-race. If it is absolutely impossible to find this sort of man in future years upon the Cam, it will remain only for the ancient partisans of the light blue to transfer their affections to the red flag of Harvard, and to hope that the oft-repeated prayer, *exoriare aliquis*, may be answered from the Charles River. The old Cambridge would be well content to see a worthy successor to her aquatic honours in the new Cambridge beyond the ocean, and would say only, as she yields her place, if it must be yielded:—

ὦ παῖ, γίνοιο πατρός ιδρυχίστηρος,  
τά δ' ἄλλ' ἕμοιός· καὶ γίνοι' ἀν' οὐ κακός.

#### THE DUNMOW NUISANCE.

GUIDE-BOOKS tell us of the Dunmow custom; and antiquaries have, we dare say, investigated it. We thought it to have become as antiquated and extinct as the incontinent widows' claim to copyhold lands on some Berkshire manor which is described in connexion with a black ram in the *Spectator*. How the Dunmow custom came into being, if it ever had any legal existence, is immaterial. If it is a legal custom, it must be connected with some manorial right, or local authority of some sort. If it is not a legal custom, it cannot be within the power of any fool to revive it, or to continue it as and when he pleases. It is quite plain therefore that Mr. E. T. Smith of Cremorne, and the buffoons whom he had associated with him, have done a scandalous, if not an illegal, act in reviving this absurd folly. As an odd relic the Dunmow flitch may have its place in our archaeological curiosities, and in the literature of proverbial sayings; but the respectable inhabitants of that quiet little town, and the public sense of propriety, may reasonably complain when the revival is conducted with the indecency which seems to have found favour with Mr. Smith and his co-revivalists. The oath to be taken by the claimants to the porcine reward of domestic happiness—which oath is the old one—amongst other things places in the front a denial of nuptial transgression. This single point was apparently the reason why this Atellan farce was revived. Mr. E. T. Smith went down to Dunmow, having first provided himself with two couples of claimants for the flitch, and constituted a Court of Inquiry—comprised of himself as judge, a foul-tongued actor named Garden, unknown to fame, who appeared as mock counsel for the claimants, and the notorious Brooks, of the Judge and Jury Club, as a sort of devil's advocate and opponent general on the other side. The jury, we are told, was a mixed one of gentlemen and ladies—ladies, one would think, of the Cremorne type, or they could not have stood the subsequent proceedings. We shall only indicate what they must have been, by a single extract:—

LEADER (claimant) said his wife's name was Mary Jane.

GARDEN (for claimant). Produce your Mary Jane. You have produced nothing more than your Mary Jane. I believe you have no children?

LEADER. No.

GARDEN. How long have you been married?

LEADER. Four years.

Mr. Garden here asked a question, which was greeted with laughter.

Mr. Brookes continued his cross-examination, after making an observation of a very broad kind.

Broad, that is, for the official of the filthy Judge and Jury mock trials; which shows how very broad it must have been. This sort of thing requires no comment. To bring before the public and a whole neighbourhood the edifying spectacle of two professors of the nasty art of *double entendre* vying with each other in the pretty pastime of saying the most indecent things in the most decent way, is a matter for the magistrates. Smith and his associates only invest in the Dunmow Flitch as an advertisement for Cremorne and the sty in Leicester Square; and Dunmow encourages it because this ribaldry and folly fills the Dunmow public-houses. But we suppose that there is a bench of magistrates in those parts, and the public will have something to say if it ever hears again of these offensive pranks of the great theatrical speculator.

#### REVIEWS.

##### THE PHILOSOPHICAL YEAR AND THE BÂBYS.\*

THE second number of M. F. Pillon's *Philosophical Annual*, to which the editor and M. Ch. Renouvier are the sole contributors, though similar in form to the first, which we noticed at the time of its publication (*Saturday Review*, May 23, 1868), differs from it widely in the character of its contents. There an attempt was made to show the prevalent state of European thought, as manifested in theoretical politics, ethics, aesthetics, history, and philology; here the papers are only three in number—one by M. Renouvier, discussing a particular metaphysical point, the other two by M. Pillon, virtually historical, comprising a survey of certain Asiatic religions, taken much after the manner employed by M. Adolph Franck in his collection of articles entitled *Religion et Philosophie*.

The object of the elaborate paper by M. Renouvier, headed "L'Infini, la Substance et la Liberté," is to show the general tendency of philosophers, from the earliest ages to the present time, to promulgate a belief in an absolute substance and a completed infinity, fatal to the admission of human freedom. The only thinkers whom M. Renouvier would except from this statement, though he notices the advocates of the most diverse systems, are Aristotle and Kant. The writer is not nearly so lucid as when last year he expounded the Utopian views of various sects of Socialists; but, as far as we can understand him, his tendency is not widely different from that displayed in Kant's "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft," and he would save individual liberty by a sacrifice of all theoretical hypotheses.

The longer paper by M. Pillon consists of an eloquent and instructive description of the religions of India, divided into Vedic, Polytheism, Brahmanism, and Buddhism. It is from the shorter

\* *L'Année philosophique*. Par F. Pillon. Deuxième année (1868). Paris: Baillière. 1869.

paper by the same writer, "Une nouvelle religion en Asie," which takes the form of a review of the works composed by MM. Gobineau and Mirza-Kazem-Beg on that strange sect, the Bábys, who have lately made so much noise in Persia, that we derive matter likely to be of most interest to the reader. The Báb, to whom we briefly referred in our notice of M. Franck's book, is certainly one of the most extraordinary historical and philosophical phenomena of modern times, and we think that the episode in which he figures is here given with sufficient fulness to satisfy the general student. The story begins in the year 1843, when a young man, named Mirza-Ali Mohammed, a native of Shiraz, was studying in a theological school at Kerbala, under a renowned mystic, Sheik Hadji Seid Kazem. His father was a dealer in wool, and his family claiming descent from Ali, the first legitimate successor of the prophet according to the Shiites, he assumed the title of Seid. Nor did he confine himself to the Koran and its interpreters. He had intimate relations with the Rabbis of Shiraz, and to these are traced that resemblance to the doctrines of the Kabbala which is to be found in one of the main theories of the Bábys. Ali Mohammed began his public career as a rigid Mussulman, performed a pilgrimage to Mecca, and made a point of visiting the tomb of the revered Ali. Returned to Shiraz, he wrote a comment on the Koran, in which he discovered meanings hitherto unsuspected, and became the declared foe of the Moulahs, or regular clergy. All Shiraz was in a ferment through this theological war, and public opinion was decidedly on the side of the innovator. Finding himself at the head of a sect which increased daily in numerical force, Ali Mohammed one day declared to his disciples that he was the "Báb," or "gate," that opened for salvation. From this word his followers derived the name of Bábys, which they have since retained; but a title which the Báb afterwards assumed, that of "Nokteh," or "point," was considered still more exalted.

The Moulahs, alarmed at the progress of the Báb, endeavoured to obtain the assistance of the secular arm in repressing innovation, and the Báb, on his side, wrote to Teheran, the seat of government. An order to keep the peace was the result of the application. Not troubling itself about theological differences, the Persian Government, regarding the controversy as a nuisance, imposed silence on both the conflicting parties, and ordered the Governor of Shiraz to confine the Báb to his house. The mouth of Ali Mohammed was thus closed, but another mouth, probably more eloquent than his own, was left open—namely, that of Moulah Houssein, surnamed Boushrevieh, a man of superior intellect and courage, who distinguished himself as the first missionary of the new religion. After preaching with immense success in Khorassan, his native country, Isphahan, the learned city *par excellence*, and other places, he proceeded to Teheran, where he had the honour of an interview with the King, Mohammed Shah, and his Prime Minister, Hadji Mirza Aghassy, but when the curiosity of their august inquiries after truth was satisfied they simply ordered the missionary to quit the city.

Two imitators of Boushrevieh were soon in the field—one a devout person called Hadji-Mohammed-Ali-Balfouroushy, who had already obtained a high reputation as a saint; the other a woman, whose real name was Zerryn Tadj (Crown of Gold), but who was better known by the appellation Gourret-Oul-Ayn (Consolation of the Eyes), given to her on account of her surpassing beauty, which, however, according to her eulogists, was the least of her qualities. It is from the accession of this female prophet that the history derives much of its romantic character. The three enthusiasts shared between them the spiritual conquest of Persia, the Southern provinces being adjudged to Boushrevieh, the Northern to Balfouroushy, and the West to the "Consolation of the Eyes." Words alone had hitherto been employed for the propagation of divine truth, but they were soon to be followed by blows. Boushrevieh, quitting Teheran for Khorassan, found that province in a state of insurrection, and for the sake of self-defence called round him all the Bábys of the district. The unexpected death of the King of Persia, on September 5, 1848, improved his opportunity, by causing a general anarchy, and as he joined the small troop which he had raised in Khorassan with that which Balfouroushy had levied in Mazanderan, the two leaders found themselves at the head of a body with which they might fairly hope to render the cause of their religion triumphant. A civil war then ensued, and in spite of the superior number of their adversaries, the Bábys, who performed prodigies of valour, were getting the upper hand. Whether the Báb himself approved of their military operations appears to be a matter of doubt. There is a passage in his book in which he prohibits the use of arms, but this must refer to the relation of the Bábys among each other, for there is another passage in which they are enjoined to despoil the infidel and not to restore his property till his conversion is effected.

The rule of Mirza Aghassy, Prime Minister to Mohammed Shah, had been weak, but that of Mirza Taghy Khan, to whom the new King, Nasreddin Shah, confided the direction of affairs, was vigorous, and soon produced a change in the fortunes of the Bábys. The Báb himself, being regarded as the primary source of mischief, was removed from the citadel of Tjerigh, where he had for some time been confined, to Tauris, where he was to take his trial. His defence, before a council composed of Moulahs and Royal Commissioners, is said to have been theoretically triumphant, but his doom had been settled, and he was condemned to death, together with two of his disciples, who had been imprisoned with him. When the day appointed for execution arrived the prisoners

were led about the town, and exposed to every species of contumely. One of them, Seid-Houssein, at last lost heart, and obtained liberation by spitting in the face of his master; but the other disciple remained constant to the end. The great point was to make the execution as public as possible, for if people did not actually witness the death of the Báb they might easily have been induced to expect his reappearance. Accordingly, the master and the remaining disciple having been led back to the citadel, where they had been taken, were let down from the top of a very lofty perpendicular wall by cords passed under their arm-pits, and thus remained suspended several feet above the ground, ready to be despatched by the guns of a company selected from the regiment of Behaderan, which is composed of Christians. It is said that just before the discharge of the muskets, Moulah Mohammed Ali said to the Báb, who was suspended by his side, "Master, are you not content with me?" Strange to say, the bullets, though they killed the disciple, merely cut the cords of the master, who alighted safely on his feet; and so great an impression did this apparent miracle make, not only upon the multitude, but upon the soldiers, that the Báb had more than a fair chance of securing safety, if not triumph. The lucky moment was, however, lost; the founder of the new religion was despatched with sword and musket, and his body, after being dragged through the streets, was ignominiously flung out of the city.

Martyrdom produced its usual results. The Bábys, far from being intimidated, were infuriated by the execution of their chief, and the attempted assassination of the King towards the beginning of 1852 furnishing a pretext for more executions, the people of Teheran, who are destitute of religious enthusiasm, viewed with wondering disgust the massacre of men, women, and children, with every refinement of cruelty, the sufferers manifesting a degree of constancy comparable to that of the early Christian martyrs. Among them was the apostate Seid-Houssein, who, repenting of his baseness, now gladly shared the fate of his brethren. The lovely Gourret-Oul-Ayn was condemned to be burned; the veil, which is commonly worn by Persian women, and which she had rejected with disdain, having been put on her head when she was led to execution. This sect, far from extinct, may possibly become more powerful than ever. A youth of sixteen, named Mirza Yahya, and entitled Hezret-e-Ezel (Eternal Highness), is the recognised successor of the martyred Ali Mohammed. Escaping from Persia, he has established himself in safety at Bagdad, where he conducts operations at a distance, and secret societies of the Bábys are said still to abound in the Persian provinces of Fars and Khorassan.

The above description of the progress of a religious rebellion may scarcely seem to accord with the title of this article. However, the outline of the story is so completely told by M. F. Pillon that we could not avoid availing ourselves of his condensed material. Those who wish to go into historical details are referred to the work by M. de Gobineau (*Les Religions et la philosophie de l'Asie centrale*) which is the main source of all information on the subject. A series of articles written by the Rev. Phil. K. Arbuthnot, on the authorities of M. de Gobineau and some articles in the *Journal Asiatique* by M. Mirza Kazem Beg, promises to be very complete if we may judge from the first, which appears in the August number of the *Contemporary Review*.

For the following succinct description of the tenets of the Bábys no apology is needed. The doctrine of the new sect is contained in an Arab book called *Biyan* (or the Exposition), written in 1848 by the Báb himself, and, in spite of prohibition, secretly circulated from one end of Persia to the other. The God of the system is an eternal One, like the Deity of the Jews and the Mahometans, but he is not a person in the sense understood by the followers of Moses or of Mahomet, inasmuch as his constant tendency is to depart from himself, and become generally diffused. Creation, with him, is not a voluntary but a necessary act, and at the consummation of all things his creatures, never utterly distinct from himself, will be absorbed into the unity whence they have proceeded. So far the theology of the Bábys is precisely that of the Alexandrians, and of the innumerable sects by whom the doctrines of Emanation and Pantheism are combined. In the act of creation the Deity, according to the creed of the Bábys, makes use of seven sacred letters, choosing them from an infinity of others. These represent seven divine attributes—namely, force, power, will, action, condescension, glory, and revelation. The fact that these attributes or virtues can be expressed both by spoken words and by writing indicates the double creation of spirit and matter. As spoken words, they are the source of things purely intellectual; as written letters they are the source of all visible forms, without which matter cannot exist. There is one number even more sacred than 7, and that is 19, which is obtained from the word "hyy" living. The numerical value of "h" (ha) in the Arabic alphabet being 8, and that of "y" (ya) being 10, we obtain 18, which by the addition of one to represent "a" (elif) in the form "ahyy," denoting "he who gives life," becomes 19, the numerical expression of God himself. The same number may be obtained from the word "wahed," by which the Koran designates God as the One, since according to the Arab system  $w=6$ ,  $a=1$ ,  $h=8$ ,  $d=4$ , amounting in the aggregate to 19. Those of our readers to whom the disregard of the *e* may seem capricious should be informed that this vowel in the Arabic system is denoted, not by a letter, but by a point only; whereas the *a* is supported by a soundless "elif" corresponding to the "Aleph" of the Hebrews. Here we have a close and probably conscious imitation of the doctrine of the Kabbala.

Evil, with the Bábys, is simply the imperfection consequent

upon the temporary separation of the creature from the divine essence, or, to use German phraseology, upon a fall from the Absolute. Thus, every man, however remote from his divine origin, is naturally good, and as there is no necessary antagonism between the material and the spiritual, asceticism is absurd. This practical result of the system separates it widely from the Alexandrian school, but it is a more legitimate consequence of the doctrine of Emanation than the austere life inculcated by the followers of Plotinus.

Man, being imperfect, needs divine instruction, and the Deity supplies his spiritual want by means of a series of prophets. Like all other men, the prophet is an emanation of the Deity, but of an excellent and superior kind, which, remaining in constant communication with its origin, is a mediation between God and the universe, a breath from the divine mouth, which proceeds and returns more rapidly than any other being. Essentially all the prophets are identical with each other, but they differ through the part which each has to perform. The earliest prophets, dealing with human nature when, paralysed from its fall, it lay in a torpid state, confined themselves to the inculcation of the simplest truths and precepts, which became insufficient as humanity advanced. The law of Moses was followed by the teaching of the Christian Saviour, who was in turn succeeded by Mahomet. The most perfect revelation hitherto is that represented by the Báb; but the gift of prophecy, under this last dispensation, has this strange peculiarity, that it is conferred not upon one person but upon nineteen. We have shown how this sacred number is derived from the causative verb "abyy," signifying "he who gives life." Now the causative form of the verb is derived from the prefixed "a" (elif), the use of which is exactly analogous to that of the "h" in the Hebrew conjugation, Hiphil, and which, it seems, though actually a letter, is called the "point." This point is the principle of unity, the summit of the system, and while the prophets are nineteen in number, the Báb himself, as the point, holds a position above the other eighteen, the whole group being one incarnation of the divine nature. Nor can the sacred group become incomplete by any casualty. Every one of its members has two natures—one human and mortal, the other immortal and divine; and when the former of these perishes, the latter is at once transferred to another person. It is scarcely necessary to remark that the prophet in this sense has scarcely anything in common with the prophet of the Hebrews and Mahometans, but is rather an inseparable portion of an oligarchical incarnation. We are intellectually in an Indian, not a Western Asiatic, atmosphere.

But we have described the ideal of the system, not its actual state; Bábism as it ought to be and will be, not as it is. The present Báb is but the precursor of a superior revelation, and only eleven of the nineteen sacred persons are as yet inscribed in his book, leaving a vacancy of eight to be filled by a further dispensation, which will speedily be followed by the last judgment and the end of all things. Then the good will be absorbed into the Deity and the bad will be utterly annihilated, non-entity being the ultimate term of evil, and eternal punishment being foreign to the system. In their approach to moral perfection, the Bábys are always to keep the sacred number nineteen before their eyes. When the world is in harmony with the designs of the Creator, the year will contain nineteen months, the month nineteen days, the day nineteen hours, and the hour nineteen minutes. Every college of priests will consist of eighteen members, with a "point" for their chief. Veneration for the same number is to regulate weights and measures, and if the theory of some British *literati* be sound, we can fancy a very pretty quarrel between the Bábys standing up for their holy nineteen, and the ancient Egyptians who built pyramids in honour of the number twelve.

To Talismans much importance is attached. According to the precepts of the Báb every man ought to wear an amulet shaped like a star, the rays of which are formed of lines containing the names of the Deity; and in the same manner every woman is to wear an amulet, but this is to be of a circular shape and the names are to be different. Prayer is reduced to a minimum, being required only once a month, and is most efficacious when he who prays is alone, since in the temples prayer is inferior to meditation. Circumcision is abolished, and the ablutions so important according to Mahometan nations are deprived of their religious significance, and regulated by mere sanitary considerations.

The ethical code of the Bábys is based on a principle of universal love, and, utterly opposed to the spirit of vengeance, invalidates that *lex talionis* which is written in the Pentateuch and the Koran. The punishment commonly assigned for unneighbourly acts, including legal imprisonment, is abstinence from the nuptial couch for a period of nineteen months. If the French are at all fairly represented by their novels and plays, it is very clear that the Báb, had he wished to promulgate his doctrines in Paris, would have considerably modified his system of pains and penalties. Almsgiving is obligatory, and so is hospitality, every man being bound to entertain nineteen guests in as many days in his own house, even if he can afford them no more than a cup of water. At the same time, in direct opposition to Eastern nations, mendicancy is prohibited. This prohibition is the result of the anti-ascetic spirit of the Bábys, who are even enjoined to seek after rich garments and precious stones. Personal beauty is to be sedulously cultivated. Men are to shave off their beards, and abstain from sitting on the ground, thus specially running counter to Oriental usage. In fact, a state of social enjoyment is generally recommended, the possibility of an abuse of the good things of this life being staved off by a prohibition of intoxicating drugs, arrack, and opium, which the faith-

ful are forbidden either to sell or to buy. But the most important peculiarity of the Bábys in their antagonism to Eastern notions is their strong advocacy of the rights of woman, and it is probably to their zeal for female emancipation that they are indebted for the devotion of such martyrs as the lovely and eloquent Gourret-Oul-Ayn. By the system of the Báb, women are not only liberated from the slavery imposed upon them by the Mahometans, but are raised to that equality with men which even in the Western world is considered Utopian. The prophetic oligarchy is not complete unless one of the nineteen members is a woman. As for the veil, so long the symbol and instrument of female chastity, it is an abomination; the new Koran openly declaring that every Báb is authorized to see, and be seen by, every woman without distinction. Hence the veil forced upon Gourret-Oul-Ayn at the time of her execution was a deadly insult. Polygamy falls with the veil, concubines are prohibited, and though the Báb, with the view of meeting the Mahometans halfway, declared that a man might take unto himself two lawful wives, his successors repudiate the license thus accorded, and hold that monogamy is the only proper state. Parents are enjoined to treat their daughters with especial tenderness, inasmuch as these are more pleasing to God than their sons. The veneration of the Báb towards women is accompanied by an extreme solicitude for children, and the discipline which we of the West commonly associate with the birch is regarded by them with evident disfavour. In the *Biyan* a little child is described imploring his preceptor not to beat him till he has attained the age of five. Even when the limit is passed the master is entreated to give no more than five strokes, and to contrive the interposition of some medium between the skin of the sufferer and the castigating hand or cane. With all their oddities, the Bábys certainly make a more respectable figure than the Mormons of America or the Socialists of Europe.

To return for a moment to the *Année philosophique*, there is more unity of purpose in this second volume of the series than appears at first glance. The long papers of MM. Renouvier and Pilon are both directed against Pantheism, one treating the subject from a philosophical, the other from an historical, point of view; while in the shorter paper on the Bábys a novel form of Pantheism is exhibited.

#### DEAN COLET ON THE HIERARCHIES OF DIONYSIUS.\*

MR. LUPTON has done a good work in editing these hitherto unpublished treatises of Dean Colet, and he has done it well. The Introduction contains a good deal of interesting information about Colet and his connexion with the so-called works of Dionysius the Areopagite; the translation is good, and the notes, as a rule, are unpretending and to the point. Though Colet has been rather a favourite hero with writers who are always on the look out for "Reformers before the Reformation"—a very misleading form of expression—little was really known about him till the appearance two years ago of Mr. Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers of 1498*, which, under a studiously infelicitous title, and with a good deal of crotchety confusion of ideas in the method of treatment, contained also much valuable information. Colet died, still in middle life, in 1519, two years after Luther had affixed his famous theses on the church doors at Wittenberg, and before the first mutterings of the religious storm in England. But he had bequeathed to posterity two important monuments—one in the foundation of St. Paul's School, which is well known to everybody, and one in his writings, none of which saw the light for two centuries after his death. His comments on St. Paul's Epistles, originally delivered as lectures at Oxford, and on Genesis, have not even yet been published. Mr. Lupton dwells on some of the reasons which may have given the Dionysian writings a special interest in his eyes. Whether or not Colet was influenced in this direction, as his translator surmises, by the study of Mirandola and Ficino, there can be no doubt that he sympathized fully with the great classical and Platonic revival of the day which had taken its origin in Italy, and with the reaction against a dry and lifeless scholasticism of which Europe had long been weary. For such a mind both the Platonic and the mystical element in Dionysius would have a peculiar attraction. And it is remarkable—though Mr. Lupton, rather to our surprise, omits all reference to the circumstance—that in this he should have followed the example of Scotus Erigena, who was as little in harmony with the current theological obscurantism of the ninth century as Colet was with that of the fifteenth. There is, however, an important difference between them. The works of Dionysius, which are now all but universally acknowledged to be a composition not earlier than the end of the fifth century, are deeply tinged with Neo-Platonic pantheism, and the same may be said of the works of Erigena, though Dean Milman is probably mistaken in supposing that he actually became a Pantheist. If there is, to use Mr. Lupton's words, no explicit teaching on the Incarnation and Redemption in Dionysius, the exposition of these doctrines in Erigena's *De Divisione Naturarum* is vague and pantheistic in tone, and very difficult to reconcile with the language of Scripture or the traditional teaching of the Church. Colet, on the other hand, supplements and corrects, perhaps unconsciously, these peculiarities of Dionysius. When, indeed, Mr. Lupton goes

\* *Two Treatises on the Hierarchies of Dionysius*. By John Colet, D.D., formerly Dean of St. Paul's. With a Translation, Introduction, and Notes. By J. H. Lupton, M.A. London: Bell & Daldy. 1869.