

Poetry, Comedy, and Duty. By C. C. Everett, D.D. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1888.

THE analysis of the æsthetic and ethical elements in the mind is one of the most interesting subjects of philosophy. It is also one that is so fruitful in absurdities as to make it a great pleasure to meet with a book such as this of Prof. Everett's, in which the whole matter is treated lucidly and with a certain unity running through it. Little claim for real originality would be made for the substance of the volume, although the author's mind plays freely about the material which his scholarship has provided him with: he acknowledges that portions of what he affirms are drawn from Hegel, and he refers other parts of the truth to Schopenhauer; but he has framed his thoughts, however derived, into a consistent and intelligible whole. He takes the idealistic point of view, finds beauty to be an object of contemplation, poetry to be a representative art, with the ideal for its subject. In ethics, similarly, from motives of love and honor and under an obligation of obscure and blended origin, men take that practical attitude towards the ideal which is summed up in the word duty. In the æsthetic branch of the inquiry, the nature of poetry as an art, the poetic aspect of nature, the analysis of tragedy and comedy, are the principal topics, after the subject has been philosophically opened. In these chapters there are criticisms of an acute and thoughtful kind in explanation of those matters which the great masters of formal analysis have advanced, from Aristotle to Kant and Spencer, and it is observable that all are noticed with equal courtesy. Much of the ground is still doubtful. Prof. Everett offers a single suggestion of his own with reference to the fact that incongruities in tragedy give pain and in comedy give amusement: he thinks that the difference lies in this, that the comic incongruities affect only the form, the tragic go further and affect the contents. Comedy passes into tragedy when the results of the action enter into the thought; "nothing is comic to the heart." It is an interesting distinction, and falls in with the logical habits of the author's mind and style.

These matters, however, require too ample illustration in their discussion to be entered upon here. It is necessary only to notice the author's clear and precise method of developing his subject, the absence of all dogmatism and controversy from his manner, the extreme conscientiousness of his thinking, which are distinguishing qualities of his work. Those who are skilled to think and to write like this are few in our day—perhaps because logical discipline is no longer what it was in the old schools.

Books and Men. By Agnes Repplier. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1888.

THIS is one of those books by a reader which are often so delightful a resource in leisure hours. The author is also a good writer, with a pleasant rippling style, and occasionally the sparkle of piquancy on the surface—able enough to hold her own with words; but first of all she is a reader, and this small volume of miscellaneous papers is the fruit of her enjoyment of her library. They are seven in number, and range from the ways of children and parents to the character of Claverhouse; but, whatever the subject, superstition or criticism or sentiment or pessimism, the essay has the same sort of interest. There is abundance of anecdote, usually drawn from history or imaginative literature, which gives the reader a comfortable sense of being familiar with a great many more books than he has ever read; and these illus-

trations are selected with skill and effectively grouped. If the elder Disraeli had been a reviewer of rather unimportant books, we should fancy him writing in such a style, with this blending of illustrations from widely different sources with good taste and excellent sense in the substance of the thought. The author is by no means the slave of her books; she has the freedom of the little literary citadel which is hers; and her remarks are those of an observant and thoughtful mind, not without a disposition to a certain grave humor which flavors the page. Her advice with respect to children's books we have already commended, and the essay now reprinted seems to us the most useful, and in style the brightest, in the small collection.

Perhaps the volume occasionally suffers from the triviality of its subjects, for many themes are glanced at in its pages; and in such parts, as, for example, with Mr. Edgar Fawcett's opinion of critics, the topic is really so slight that no wisdom in the comment can reconcile us to wasting our time over it. It is not every book that can be made an excuse for such literary recreation as this author delights in, not every writer that can be fitly yoked in the same reference: Mr. Saltus and Leopardi, for example, are not twins of the intellect. There is some disproportion in the author's literary perspective. This, nevertheless, is a delightful new form of the miscellaneous article, and within its limits it reaches real excellence both in matter and form. Moreover, beside its seriousness and its touch of humor, it has a very agreeable weakness for the shapes of old romance—giant-killing and hero-worshipping ghosts that never come to the "materializing" point, and other trifles of the imagination. Altogether, the author affords a fine and full expression of what one may call her private literary life.

Elementary Political Economy. By Edwin Cannan, M. A. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Macmillan. 1888.

THE difficulty of preparing elementary treatises is generally in an inverse ratio to their size, and this is certainly true of the science of political economy. There are large tracts of debatable ground still to be apportioned and regulated, and some even of the most important definitions are yet unsettled. Under these circumstances, an author may present such doctrines as may be called canonical, omitting controversial matter; or he may adopt the views of a certain writer or school, and call them the science. He cannot, within the limits of an elementary treatise, take up controverted points and state opposing theories. It is necessary, in short, to be guilty both of the sin of omission and of the sin of commission. We cannot praise Mr. Cannan more highly than by saying that his sins of both kinds are on the whole of a venial character, and that his merits are conspicuous. He has a strong grasp of the subject, his style is clear, and his method is sensible. His book is not meant for children—indeed, it frequently taxes the attention of readers well acquainted with the subject; but it is never obscure.

The first part of it is devoted to explaining the causes of the wealth of nations, the second part deals with the causes of the wealth of individuals exclusive of the influence of State action, and the third shows how these causes are modified by such action. The first part is excellent, but the others are more open to criticism. The discussion of value is not satisfactory, perhaps for lack of space to make it so, and there are many statements that are alto-

gether too sweeping. Such are the declarations, that where public criticism is freely allowed, State management is as good as that of large joint-stock enterprises; that no man will be restrained from adding to his income by any increase of income tax; and that in the case of excise duties the remuneration of the producers will be diminished directly by the deduction of the tax from their profits. Why did the distillers during our civil war persuade Congress to increase the tax upon whiskey? But, as we have intimated, the necessity of making unqualified statements is the constitutional weakness of elementary treatises, and this book offends less than most of its class.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

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Beecher, Rev. H. W. *Sermons in Plymouth Pulpit.* 4 vols. Foris, Howard & Hulbert. \$1.50 each.
Benelke, Dr. M. L. *Astronomy Note Book.* A. Lovell & Co.
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Cook, E. *A Popular Handbook to the National Gallery.* With notes collected from the works of Mr. Ruskin. Macmillan & Co. \$4.
Dunlop, J. C. *History of Prose Fiction.* New ed. revised. 2 vols. Scribner & Welford.
Eggelston, E. *The Graysons: A Story of Illinois.* The Century Co. \$1.50.
Ghulam, D. *The Life and Life-Work of Behramji M. Malabari.* Bombay: Education Society Press.
Goldsmith, O. *The Vicar of Wakefield.* Scribner & Welford.
Greene, H. R. *Inductive Language Lessons: Elementary Grammar and Composition.* A. Lovell & Co. 54 cents.
Hale, E. E., Sr. and Jr. *Franklin in France. Part II. The Treaty of Peace, and Franklin's Life till his Return.* Boston: Roberts Bros. \$3.
Henty, G. A. *Captain Bayley's Heir: A Tale of the Gold Fields of California.* Scribner & Welford.
Henty, G. A. *The Lion of St. Mark: A Tale of Venice.* Scribner & Welford.
Hervey, T. K. *The Book of Christmas.* Boston: Roberts Bros. \$2.
Holden, W. *Fourteen Sonnets.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.
Holden, W. *Song of the Sea.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.
Index Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office, U. S. Army. Vol. IX. *Medicine (Popular)*—Nywelt, Washington.
Irving, H., and Marshall, F. A. *The Works of William Shakespeare.* Vol. IV. Scribner & Welford.
Janssen's *American Amateur Athletic and Aquatic History, 1839-1888.* Illustrated. Outing Co. 75 cents.
Jukes-Browne, A. J. *The Building of the British Isles: A Study of Geographical Evolution.* Illustrated. Scribner & Welford.
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Molloy, J. F. *The Life and Adventures of Edmund Keegan, Tragedian.* 2 vols. Scribner & Welford.
Nichol, I. *Francis Bacon: His Life and Philosophy.* Part I. Bacon's Life. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. \$1.25.
Payson, E. *The Law of Equivalents in its Relation to Political and Social Ethics.* Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$2.
Parish, H. P. *The Western Wanderer.* Ombra. W. L. Allison.
Philpott, H. J. *Tariff Chats.* G. P. Putnam's Sons. 25 cents.
Plutarch's *Morals.* Translated by A. R. Shilleto. Vol. II. Scribner & Welford.
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