

execution. Around the scaffold the crowd was considerable, but not one single Bulgarian was to be seen. The corpses were left exposed until the evening."

To force an unhappy victim to carry probably his own parish priest to the scaffold is a refinement of cruelty worthy of the Turk. This act, indeed, to some extent, resembles a scene in the earthly career of One whom we, as Christians—equally with the Bulgarians—recall with sorrow. How long these atrocities are to continue, God alone knows. The unfortunate Bulgarians, this naturally peaceable and industrious people, have a hard fate in this world, a worse than Egyptian bondage to bear, but their almost intolerable sufferings have hitherto been solely laid at the door of their oppressors, the Turks; now, however, it is liberty-loving England who shares the blame, and is securing the enmity of the 12,000,000 Christians of European Turkey.—I am, Sir, &c.,
A BRITISH RESIDENT IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

PUBLIC OPINION ON TURKEY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—It is most true, as stated in your article entitled, "How Public Opinion is Formed upon Foreign Affairs," that "Lord Palmerston treated the conditions of peace imposed in 1856 as the conditions of a new probation for the Turks." No one knew his mind at that time better than Lord Russell, who, in his "Recollections and Suggestions, 1813-73," says:—"Lord Palmerston himself did not expect that the Treaty of 1856 would last fourteen years, which was the actual time of its duration;" and Lord Russell adds, with reference to the later views of Lord Palmerston:—"He was anxious to press upon Turkey the reform of her finances and an honest administration of justice, and he did not disguise his opinion that Great Britain could not go to war to defend a dead carcase."

Since those words were written, the condition of the finances of Turkey has passed from bad to bankruptcy, and the hope of "an honest administration of justice" has faded into despair.—I am, Sir, &c.,

Reform Club, July 11.

ARTHUR ARNOLD.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—Will you allow me a few lines to correct what is a serious error in the interesting notice of William Blake which you published in your last number? It is there stated that until the publication of Mr. Gilchrist's "Life," "the neglect and misunderstanding that had embittered his life continued in full force, rather gaining than losing ground," and that "there was no voice uplifted to prove that William Blake, painter and poet, had a right to lay claim to either title, or was anything but a monomaniac." Now, Sir, in the first place, Blake was not a man unknown to his generation. He was, indeed, never a popular artist, because he never took any reasonable means to make himself so, but he received during his lifetime the most thorough appreciation from all his contemporaries whose good opinions were best worth having. At the art circle which used to meet at the house of Mrs. Mathews, in Rathbone Place, he came into contact with the great artists of the day. Flaxman and Fuseli were both warm friends of Blake's, and bore the strongest possible testimony to his genius. Flaxman even went so far as to say that Blake's designs would be as much sought after as those of Michael Angelo, while Charles Lamb, in one of his letters, speaks of the real poetic genius shown in Blake's "Songs." Nor, again, was Mr. Gilchrist the first appreciative biographer whom Blake obtained. In 1828, one year after his death, the Keeper of the Prints and Drawings in the British Museum published a very interesting work entitled, "Nollekens and his Times," a collection of memoirs of the most celebrated artists contemporary with Nollekens. Amongst these is a most appreciative and important notice of Blake's life and work. The writer begins with an indignant protest against the idea that Blake was mad, and shows throughout his memoir as warm and as acute an appreciation of his genius as any critic has since.—I am, Sir, &c.,
E. T. C.

AN APPEAL FOR TOTAL ABOLITION OF VIVISECTION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—It can hardly now be said that there is need to call attention to this matter. The public mind is becoming informed, and no small amount of public feeling is stirred about it. But more is needed than attention or indignation. There must be determined action, firm and unabated, till the foul thing is cast out, and the flaying, opening, and dissection of live animals, under

any pretext whatever, is abolished. One cannot believe that Englishmen should, in the light of the information they now possess, tolerate the infliction of torture on innocent and helpless creatures, endowed with sensibility, intelligence, and affection. Knowledge so sought is forbidden knowledge, relief so obtained for ourselves can have no blessing.

We are told that if experiments on live animals are forbidden by law, the surgeons will experiment on human beings instead. It is much more likely that this will follow as the result of the present practice than be a substitute for it. The lesser is sure to lead to the greater, or at least to a less gentle treatment of the human patient, by men who have been trained in the infliction of torture. In spite of all that people may say about the high character of English surgeons for humanity and gentleness, vivisection, if permitted, must increase. International communication is now so constant, that the habits of different countries are becoming more and more alike. What is now done by surgeons in Italy and Germany will certainly be done here in England, at no distant day. And everybody allows that vivisection is carried to a great excess in those countries. Let us dismiss all idea of this English character being likely to remain for ever of so surpassingly superior a sort as some journals would wish us to believe.—I am, Sir, &c.,
J. W. H. MOLYNEUX.

POETRY.

POLITICS ARE DEAD.

"POLITICS are dead!" every question settled,
So I hear it said,—and it makes me nettled.
Questions still are plenty in our little isle;
I could tell you twenty, if you'll only wait awhile,—
Only wait a little, wait a little, wait a little while.

First, there are the poor, mark of every slaughter,
Cesspools at their door, sewage in their water:
In each crowded dwelling poison'd air and vile;
So you'll hear men telling, if you'll only wait a while.

Next, there is the drink, licensed source of ruin;
For Magistrates must wink at what their friends are brewing;
Madness, murder, riot,—on it all they smile;
But tho' men keep quiet, yet it's only for a while.

Then, too, there's the land; poor folk cannot get it;
Landlords understand too well how to let it:
Farmers, once contented, now begin to rile;
Swear they're overrented, and they'll show it in a while.

And is there no cure for wealth's distribution?
Here great riches, lure! there great destitution!
Can these camps divided nothing reconcile?
So it seems decided, but it's only for a while.

Once I saw a ship on a calm seaswaying,
The least finger-tip at its helm obeying:
In the distance heaving rose a cloudy pile,
But men unbelieving mocked it for awhile,—
But 'twas only for a little, for a very little while.

So a mighty nation, rousing from its sleep,
Feeling indignation through each fibre creep,
Sick of special-pleaders, who with words beguile,
To its ancient leaders yet will rally in a while,—
Only wait a little, wait a little, wait a little while.

BOOKS.

LORD AMBERLEY'S "ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF."*

[FIRST NOTICE.]

THIS work has more than one claim on the reader's attention. Its intrinsic interest is considerable, but we can easily imagine that the first feelings it will arouse will be of a nature which rather tend to confuse an estimate of its intrinsic interest. "The adherents of the universal religion," the writer tells us, after confessing such disadvantages as they have in comparison with the adherents of that particular form of religion called Christianity, "are not without a happiness of their own. . . . They desire but the Truth, and the Truth has made them free. . . . They are not

* *Analysis of Religious Belief.* By Viscount Amberley. London: Trübner.

pained or troubled because other men see not as they see. They aim not at conquering the minds of men, far rather would they stimulate and help them to discover a higher truth than they themselves have been permitted to know. And as their action will be inspired with the hope of contributing their mite to the treasury of human knowledge, well-being, and moral good, so their death will be the expression of that peaceful faith which has sustained their lives. Even though when torn away, when in their own judgment they have still much to do, they will not repine at the necessity of leaving it undone, even though they are well aware that their names, which might have been illustrious in the annals of our race, will now be buried in oblivion. For the disappearance of a single life is but a ripple on the ocean of humanity, and humanity feels it not." (II., 495-6.) The posthumous work of one who in these words describes his own fate appeals to the reader with an interest that is at once adventitious and legitimate, nor are we prepared to say exactly what would remain if this were subtracted. We should in any case regard it as worthy of respectful criticism, and of some decided censure.

Our first objection regards the plan of the work. A study of the Evolution of Religion—in which words we should describe Lord Amberley's real object—seems to us utterly confused by the jumble of historical and non-historical religions which meets us here. The defects of such a framework are as obvious as its redundancies. Why, for instance, is the religion of classic nations not thought worthy of mention? A strange allusion in Vol. II., p. 492, suggests the surely impossible fact that it has not been thought worthy of acquaintance. But this kind of confusion is the natural result of deserting the good old geographical outlines for such an arbitrary arrangement as that which here sets the reader to study the holy books of a religion in one chapter, and its prophets in another. The perusal of such a work gives a constant sense of repetition, and an ultimate sense of incompleteness.

However, it is not a defective plan which will most jar on the feelings of some among Lord Amberley's readers. They will feel, in turning from his sympathetic account of the religions of India and China, to the cold flippancy with which he discusses that under which Europe has become the focus of the world, that the saying, "Lorsqu'on n'aime plus, on ne se souvient pas d'avoir aimé," falls short of the truth, and that even in a just nature extinct love forbids justice. They will discern, with not unmixed regret, as they read some pages where the author seems to have surrendered his pen to a modern Lucian, without Lucian's point or wit, that there is a Nemesis by which good-taste takes flight when reverence is banished, and that the literary instinct is here at one with something deeper. But although it is true that there is something offensive in this criticism which is the fault of an individual, we must not forget that it rests on an assumption generally supposed to be a part of the faith it assails. This work is the natural outcome of the teaching that there is one true religion, and a great many false religions. So far as Christians have ever taught that belief, they prepare ammunition for the attack which is here made on Christianity. When men accustomed to this view look on the progress of thought, they see, almost at the first glance, that the sense of communion with the invisible must be everywhere trustworthy, or everywhere untrustworthy. It is impossible for an impartial thinker to turn a page of history without confessing to himself that Religion, whether it is a good thing or a bad thing, is at least a unity. Its fundamental postulate must be granted to all its votaries, or refused to all. And we must confess, however deeply we lament it, that those who say, "All dreams of a Heavenly Father are false, except what were originated on a narrow slip of the coast of the Mediterranean," prepare the way for those who say, "All such dreams are false throughout the world." We should have thought, indeed, that the first assertion belonged to the past, and these volumes, so far as they take a polemic aspect, seem to us to be addressed to a past condition of things; but this is not easy and perhaps not very important to decide. Profoundly true are the words of Lessing, that "superstition does not lose her influence when she is recognised," and it may well be that a belief which has long ceased to have any positive hold on the mind still shapes with the mould of long association the protest of those who deny it. Non-Christians will argue that Christianity is as delusive as all other religions, long after Christians have ceased to assert that it is the only exception to the general law of illusion in the spiritual world.

The volumes before us, at all events, are a specimen of such an argument, though we, perhaps, do some injustice to the candour and gentleness of the greater portion of the book in fixing the

attention on what is polemic in them. Except when the author speaks of the faith of Judæa, there is no want of sympathy for those who look up to a Being near them and unseen by them, and the following passage, which, as the most interesting in the book, we give entire, seems to us to contain a true clue through the tangled labyrinth of men's thoughts concerning that which is above them:—

"First of all, there arises in the mind of man, as soon as he begins to speculate on the world in which he lives, the idea of a Creator. He cannot conceive the existence of the material objects with which he is familiar, without conceiving also some Being more powerful than himself, who has made them what they are. His notions of creation may be, no doubt, extremely limited. He may confine the operation of his God to that small portion of the universe with which he is most familiar. But that the idea of an invisible yet pre-eminent deity arises very early in the mental development of the human race, and remains brooding dimly above the popular idolatry, has been abundantly shown. This is the belief in *God the Father*. The second stage, so closely interwoven with the first as to be inseparable from it in actual history, is the incarnation of this idea. The supreme Creator is too lofty, too great, too abstract to be held steadily before the mind, and worshipped in his unclouded glory. . . . No sooner is the religious idea conceived in the mind, than it begins to be clothed in flesh and blood. . . . Then a concrete expression is desired, and we have in poetical language the belief in *God the Son*. Last of all comes the belief in *God the Holy Spirit*. With this step a far higher grade of religious sentiment is reached, for God is now conceived not only as creating or governing the world without, but as entering into the mind of man, to inspire his relations and influence his heart. A relation which up to this time was merely external is rendered internal and intimate. The Holy Spirit not only speaks to our souls, it speaks in them and through them. We receive not the commands of an almighty potentate, but the inspiring force of a being who, while raising us above ourselves, is still a part, the best part, of ourselves." (Vol. II., pp. 433-434.)

The process thus traced by Lord Amberley is summed up by him in some lines of Heine's, prefaced as a motto to this section, paraphrasing the last quotation, which some of his readers will smile at hearing him describe as an autobiographic utterance of faith from the poet. Most of us will be inclined to think that Heine has more truly intimated his object of worship in some jingling verses, where he makes the most sacred name in the Hebrew Scriptures at once a rhyme and antithesis to the Venus of Canova. But we may take his dramatic utterance as a poetic translation of the paragraph we have quoted above, and a true expression of much individual development, whatever it was in relation to this very unexpected witness in the Court of Theology.

If the relation to a Divine being lies, as we believe it does, at the root of all human relation, we shall best understand the varied stages of its development by referring them to these human types. It is our belief that the bonds which make men into families are all indications of and guides to other bonds which join man to God, that that primal relation gathers up the variety of feeling and duty which human kindred exercises and develops. For the simplest stage of religious belief, this is obvious enough. The trust, the reverence, the loyalty which, under even tolerably happy circumstances, are the portion of a child in its father's home, outgrow their object, and want a larger space for exercise and stronger support to lean on. They find their natural development in the belief in one who is above humanity, just as the father is above the child; one who called it into life by that mysterious creation of which fatherhood is (and in early ages, was still more definitely) the human type; one who surrounds it with exactly that fostering care of which human parentage is the only instance amongst quite average humanity; one before whom they may pour out their needs and hopes with that unflinching egotism for which, under a like restriction, only this relation affords the perfectly secure earthly channel. Whether this is the historically earliest form of religion, we are much inclined to doubt, but there is no doubt that it is an expansion of that feeling which is the first human emotion, that it is the simplest element in the compound whole which we know as Religion. Were we to give it some distinct title, we should call it the *ethical* element in religion. It translates, with a child's ultimateness, "I ought" into "Thou wilt." The moral world is perfectly simple, obedience and disobedience sum up the realms of good and of evil, and we have but to return to the allegiance that is the human right quite as much as the human duty, in order to be delivered from all that humanity need desire to escape, and obtain all that is its true and permanent blessedness.

The second stage of religion—second, we mean, in order of thought, concerning chronological sequence we say nothing—reposes on a relation that, if it is less intimate than the child's dependence on the father, is more enduring, and covers a wider space. The tie of brotherhood, the claim on sympathies that are rooted in common difficulties and experiences, the love that gives what it receives, is, among limited human beings, strongest per-

haps in those natures which are least responsive to the love of pure reverence, and comes out most distinctly in those ages which, like our own, recoil from all the relations of authority, and reject the ideal of obedience. The worship of the Father and the worship of the Brother are in a certain sense opponents. A rigid Monotheism recoils from the belief in Incarnation as from idolatry. We can hardly hope, in our present space, to do more than state our own view that this strong sense of the Divine in humanity supplies the philosophical element in religion. The word is much more inadequate than was the epithet "ethical" for the first set of tendencies, but it is, on the whole, the best we can find to describe the interests and desires which are awakened by the belief that a Son of God has appeared in human flesh, and that the drama of human history centres in, and does not merely originate from, a Divine being.

Our view of the antagonism of these forms of religion would be quite refuted by Lord Amberley's assertion that "the second stage is so closely interwoven with the first as to be inseparable from it in actual history," if this assertion were true, but it seems to us flatly contradicted by the passages we quote below. That the religion of the Creator and the religion of the Redeemer may each stand alone might, doubtless, be shown from many phases of religious life; it seems to us sufficiently established by the existence of the two great religions which we would here cite as their types,—Zoroastrianism and Buddhism.

These representative faiths were each the result of a great religious reformation—that which in the long twilight before the dawn of history separated the monotheism of Persia from the original nature-worship of the Aryan race, and that which at a period of not more than five or six centuries before our era brought Buddhism out of Brahmanism. We are somewhat disappointed by our author's extracts from the holy books which are the authorities for the Zoroastrian faith. However, it would be very difficult to give anything but a disappointing account of the Zendavesta. In reading through such a series of writings as these Parsee Scriptures, an impression is made on the mind that it is impossible to convey by extracts. Amid great tedium and much triviality, there arises a sense of some power speaking through the writer like a spring bubbling up through the rock,—a sense which the very omission of all that is tedious and trivial destroys. The words become trite when they are quoted; but no Christian can read these Scriptures without feeling strangely at home. The attempts that have been made by missionaries to detach the Parsee from his creed in order to bring him to Christianity are the most lamentable instances of that suicidal spirit which, in surrendering a common element of faith in order to aggrandise what is special, undermines its standing-ground. The impulse which a hundred years ago drew a young Frenchman round half the world with a soldier's knapsack on his back, to pursue the strange lore which, even through the garb of a language the very alphabet of which was strange to him, had put forth its fascination, was the beckoning from a beneficent spirit, that, just as the old foundations of all things sacred in Europe were to feel the shock of a great earthquake, was ready to reveal in the far East a wider basis for the faith in the Invisible than the creed of a single race, or even for a single civilisation. As the world of chivalry passed away, an older world emerged, and amid the vast unlikeness of what was lost and what was gained, there remained this one element common to the faith of the East and West,—the trust in an unseen Person, who had made the worlds, and was near to the heart of every earnest worshipper.

In choosing this particular form of the faith of the East for a type of the religion of the Father (a choice for which not Lord Amberley, but his critic, is responsible), it must be confessed that we make a decision to which quotations could bring no verbal support. Lord Amberley gives one instance in which the name "Father" is applied to Ormuzd (II., 160), but so far as we may trust the recollection of a superficial perusal of the Zendavesta, we should say it was about the only time this name is applied to the Divine being. Nevertheless Zoroastrianism seems to us the most perfect specimen among Gentile religions of that faith which looks up to a God above humanity. It is, above all others, the religion of the conscience. It is a religion of a strenuous sense of duty, of a distinct recognition of that inward dualism without which the distinctly moral life is impossible, and this is what we mean by the ethical stage of development. It is by no means always associated with this severe and simple form of Monotheism; it may exist where there is no sense of kindred with any invisible being at all, or it may co-exist with orthodox Christianity. But its natural ally is that spirit of simple reverence which is fostered by a belief in the

unity of the Divine nature, and of this belief, we conceive, the best instance that history has to show is that of the Persian creed.

The religion which seems to us best to represent the phase of worship which turns from the God above man to the God among men, is more satisfactorily portrayed in these pages than that just noticed. It may from one point of view be considered the most important of all the religions of the world, its votaries are by far the most numerous. But Buddhism does not need the poor attraction of numbers to win the attention of the student of human thought and faith. Most of all has it a strong claim on the interest of the adherents of a belief in some respects strongly resembling its own. There are many striking resemblances, most of which are noted in this volume, between the history of the originator of Buddhism, and him to whom the West has from about five centuries later paid the same mystic reverence. But there are striking differences between the history of Jesus and of Sakya Muni, and even the contrast between a death on the cross and an old age of peace and honour takes the second place beside the message of one who came to reveal the Father, and one who came to teach the way to that blank negation of all existence which is the goal of Buddhist desire. While we dwell on the principles which are to guide men in their mutual dealings, we might mistake the Buddhist Gospel for our own; he whose life carried out his own saying (quoted by Lord Amberley in a former treatise on Buddhism), "I will return the man who does me wrong the protection of my ungrudging love," fulfilled the lesson of the Sermon on the Mount as few of its followers have done. But his message regarding that which is above humanity was quite different. Here the Elder Brother stands alone. There is no Heavenly Father. Buddhism is, in fact, cited by Lord Amberley "as a refutation of the statement that belief in a personal God is necessary to religion." (II., 397.) What does this imply? It is that the ideal of the God among men may become so vivid and so prominent that it may obliterate the idea of the God above man. The Brother whom we have seen may take the place of the Father whom we have not seen and cannot see.

It is much more difficult rightly to characterise this second stage of religion than the first. The worship of a God above and separate from humanity is not distorted into anything but itself; it becomes meagre and narrow, as in Mahomedanism, but it always keeps the attention fixed on the same object. But the worship of a human God tends to pass into polytheism. The formula of this stage of belief is not "Thou ought," but "Thou mayest." The apotheosis of humanity appears to set a sanction on all human tendencies, as it does, we believe, set a sanction on all that are fundamentally and characteristically human. Luther's language about faith, for instance, is at once an example of the truth and the distortion of this belief. Any one who carried out the principle as it is sometimes expressed in a passionate narrowness, would lose the very idea of duty.

The instance of the religion of Incarnation which we have chosen here may not appear to illustrate this statement. Indeed, it would probably seem to many that Buddhism, as expounded in Lord Amberley's pages, is the most purely moral of religions. Pure, disinterested love, an actual passion of sympathy and pity, is the central feeling unfolded by all Buddhist legends. Christianity has nothing more tender, more self-obliterating; and if, indeed, to love one's brother as oneself be the fulfilling of the law, it is fulfilled in this ideal as it has hardly ever been elsewhere. Nevertheless, this ideal rather makes morality unnecessary than *is* morality. Love is the fulfilling of the law, but it is not the law. The idea of Duty is the substitute for, though by no means the enemy to, the emotion of Love. There seems in this religion no room for condemnation. The sinner is included in that embrace of divine pity with which the whole human race is rescued from its misery, and, in that glow of compassion, indignation disappears. Nothing is more unlike this feeling than the dualism of Zoroaster. The sense of conflict within, the need of conflict without, the distinct antithesis of the light and the darkness, belong to one moral phase, and the passion of tender, catholic pity, embracing all sentient being, to a very different, almost an antagonistic one.

Taken alone, we believe the *ethical* element in religion is antagonistic to that which we have, with a full knowledge how little that is said here justifies the term, denominated its *philosophical* element. A spirit of intense sympathy with all human tendencies—or to give its Christian aspect more truly, with a divine ideal of humanity—is prone to a certain contempt for the mere fulfilment of the moral law. Nothing seems to us to illustrate this antago-

nism more distinctly than the fact that in the early centuries of our era there was so much pure, un-Christian theism. The model for the satire of a Juvenal was probably a more hopeful subject for conversion than the thinker who was imbued with the pure theism of Plutarch or Epictetus. And it is possible, perhaps, for many who have now come to feel the thought of a divine Elder Brother the one hope for the race, to recall the time when it seemed to them a form of idolatry. Between the thought of a particular individual, born in such a place at such a date, present then and there in some sense in which he is not present here and now, and the thought of the Heavenly Father alike accessible to the prayer of his children in every place and at every time, there is a great chasm. What is to bridge it? What is to bring these two hostile convictions into harmony? What is the combining element that resolves the contradiction, and makes one of two? We have indicated the answer as it is given in these volumes, but even the very few words we should add to it must be deferred for a future article.

MARIE ANTOINETTE.*

THE last Queen of France will not hold a place in the romance of history so large and lasting as that which Mary Stuart has occupied, nor can controversy concerning her have so wide a range and so acrimonious a spirit. And yet the nearer figure in the distances of the past is a more tragic one than the farther, by many degrees of grief and suffering, and especially in the sense of the utter cruelty of contrast. Mary Stuart has been made supremely interesting by every pen which has attempted to tell her story, whether guided by admiration and pity, or by dislike. The romance of the time and the facts is irresistible, whether they be dealt with in the one spirit or in the other, and the Queen of Scots is the typical image of the irony of fate. Marie Antoinette is a truer and completer typical image of that irony, when one follows the outlines of her life's story, from its purple-born dawn to the coffin which cost seven francs, and the quicklime-lined pit in the common graveyard. But the frightful convulsion in which she perished upheaved so many striking individuals, and involved so many awful catastrophes, that she loses the reality and extent of her dreadful pre-eminence in most of the memoirs and histories which depict her; and also, her personal qualities were not of the romantic, nor—except the grand and simple courage which she displayed in the evil days—of the heroic order. The Austrian princess might have been a common-place person enough, if her surroundings had not been so exceptional and unnatural, even for a royal lady under the old régime; but Mary Stuart would have made her mark in any age, in any position; the individuality of her would no more have been repressible than that of her "good cousin" who killed her, if they had both been born to the lowly lot for which the Poet-Laureate makes the Princess Elizabeth sigh. Perhaps it is because we always see Marie Antoinette in somebody's hands, an object of or an agent in some scheme, that she is never so distinct as to gain our warm sympathies until she commands them by her unsurpassed suffering. Managed by her mother, managed by her husband's aunts and sisters-in-law, and by Mercy d'Argenteau, her mother's confidential friend (whose functions came unpleasantly near those of a spy), in her Dauphiness-days, Marie Antoinette—the poetic description of Edmund Burke notwithstanding—is not a very interesting personage to contemplate, except in the light of compassion for a mere girl, parted from all the wholesome and pious happiness of girlhood and of home, and thrust into an atmosphere of low, selfish, scheming, habitual falsehood, mere cold lip-service, in which no girlish graces of mind and soul could thrive, and where she found the only relief from the constraint and pretence of her scrutinised and calumniated life in the indulgence of a capricious vanity.

"L'Autrichienne," who never saw her own country after she was fifteen, and adopted France only too thoroughly, was, it seems to us, judging from her correspondence with her mother, intelligent and affectionate, simple, and endowed with a sense of humour which she would have been better without. It was dangerous,—it got in her way, it tripped her up. The story of her first years in France is very sad, under all its brilliance, when one remembers that she was so young, that she had come from so homely a home, and that she had not a true friend in the world, not even in the dull and indifferent husband, who learned, indeed, to love her afterwards, but never learned that, though she made some blunders, she was far more intelligent than he,

and especially never learned that a division of their interests was an absurd impossibility, a chimæra with which his advisers either wickedly or ignorantly frightened him. The Dauphiness is never distinct to one's fancy, except in the perfect womanliness of the picture one forms of her; there is not a masculine trait in her character or conduct, not even after she had begun to meddle in affairs of State; her insight, her instincts, her prejudices, and her errors were all womanly. The flight from Lochleven and the famous ride to Carbery would have been as impossible to Marie Antoinette as the endurance of Louis's stolid obstinacy, and the observance of perfect respect at the moments when her intellect, her heart, and her good-taste must all have been in revolt against him, would have been to Mary Stuart. Motherhood formed the character and filled the heart of the one woman, it seems to have made no impression at all upon the other.

Every writer upon the Revolution presents the Queen of France in colours to suit the general tone of his picture, whether he be a historian or a romance-writer; from M. Louis Blanc, who affects to believe her guilty in the matter of the Diamond Necklace, while he affects to believe Robespierre innocent in the Saint-Amaranthe affair, and praiseworthy as regards the execution of Danton and Desmoulins; to Alexandre Dumas, who dances her like a puppet through a series of intrigues; and Erckmann-Chatrian, who ignore her importance and action in the Revolution, and dismiss her "suppliee" in two lines; not to mention the other numerous writers belonging to both categories. On the other hand, the writers of memoirs of the Queen have generally selected, among the incidents and features of the Revolution, those which serve to illustrate their respective views of her, and though to a certain extent that is right, and the only method possible where the solitary figure *en évidence* must have so lurid a background, the selection has rarely been made with impartiality, and the reader who does not share the *idée fixe* of the writer, but wishes to be guided to the formation of a true ideal, finds himself confused, either by unbounded panegyric, or by a common-sense conviction that no single individual, even though she was a queen, could possibly have done the amount of evil attributed to Marie Antoinette, unless every man in power and place had been either a villain or a fool, or both.

Mr. Yonge's "Life of Marie Antoinette," with all its merits, has not that of repairing the general indistinctness of the Queen's image as presented to us in her youth; all the people who schemed and intrigued about and around her are plainer, to our fancy, than she is, in the days when she drew eulogiums from such widely different sources as Edmund Burke and Horace Walpole. The flowery flatteries of that joyous time are but vague, and in the letters of the Dauphiness to her mother, and the stern rebukes and astute counsels of perhaps the most passionately-political woman that ever lived—for Maria Theresa loved politics better than she loved her children, though her maternal love was very strong and constant—we come upon the *anguis in herbâ*.

Mr. Yonge has shown great judgment and discretion in selecting from the mass of correspondence at his disposal, and he meets the objection which might be taken to his reliance on M. Feuillet de Conches, by pointing out that the letters from his collection which are incorporated in this narrative are taken from the unimpugned portion of the "Recueil." He has consulted a great number of authorities, and he has gleaned from them all the salient incidents of the life of the Queen, for whom he has an ardent admiration. He has produced the most interesting history of Marie Antoinette which has yet been written in English, and nothing can be more ardent than his panegyric on the woman whose fate was terrible enough to have blinded the world to worse faults than those which the least partial scrutiny can impute to Marie Antoinette. His style is, however, so devoid of picturesqueness, that he fails to stir the feelings of his readers as such a subject should stir them; the inner meaning, the frightful interior struggle and anguish of those concluding years are not reproduced; it is with the external aspect of them, horrible, indeed, but not the worst, that the writer deals. Thus, while his work is valuable, it is not entirely satisfactory; a certain flatness comes sometimes to disappoint the reader, and make him long for a life of this wretchedest of women written outwards from the inner view of her, less a defence than an analysis. Such a life would be a feat of extraordinary difficulty; the knowledge of the end in the writer's mind, the shadow of the guillotine, the prolonged agony of the death-ride, which resumed in itself all that the most powerful and the gloomiest imagination could conceive of the anguish

* *The Life of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France.* By Charles Duke Yonge. London: Hurst and Blackett.