

the blackcock, and the trout. Cranberry gathering was often really dangerous, for the best fruit often grew on the "quaking moss," where the whole surface heaved and shook, even beneath the light tread of the children of the hill. Blackberrying, though an exciting, and to most children a delightful, occupation, has, we own, just a touch of something common about it. The greatest number of blackberries, and certainly the most profitable to pick, though not the finest, grow by roadsides. Great sprawling hedges, with a dusty, hot road below, grow blackberries by the hundred thousand. As all those low down are picked by passers-by, for there is almost no one who can resist picking that overripe and black one which adorns the end of the dull-red clusters, businesslike blackberry-gatherers must have hooked sticks to pull down those which flourish unpicked, black, ripe, and shining, at the top of the hedge. Hence the ancient phrase of getting things "by hook or by crook," which we believe was not only a privilege taken by all young ladies out blackberrying from the earliest ancient British period, but was granted particularly to the descendants of that New Forest charcoal-burner who picked up Rufus's body at Malwood, the particular wild commodity which they might take by "hook or crook" being not blackberries, but dead wood for fuel, still adhering to the trees. For really serious blackberrying has nearly always for its object the making, not of a casual pie, but of stores of blackberry jam. It demands a central store in the shape of a big basket, and minor vessels to put the particular contributions into. The cleanest and best are ordinary white marmalade-pots, from which the berries can be emptied readily into the basket, though small children always prefer to carry the fruit to the basket in their pink, purple-stained fingers. Conscientious blackberrying is very hard work. It is surprising how slowly the basket is filled. Yet to do this becomes a conscience with the gatherers, and when the top is filled level with black and shining fruit they feel that they have deserved well of the home-circle. Weighing the blackberries is a most exciting climax to the work. Even with the end of the day the anxieties inherent in this pursuit do not depart. "Blackberry nightmare" often supervenes in the watches of the night. Gigantic clusters nod from hedgerows just out of reach, or that awful catastrophe, the upsetting of the blackberry basket in the road, takes place in troubled dreams. Far more delightful, and attended with less anxiety, is the quest of the wild raspberry. "Common as blackberries" is a synonym for cheap profusion; but no one ever called wild raspberries common. They are more often found in the North than in the South, and generally in some retired wood or marshy thicket. The finest wild raspberry preserve the writer has seen was in a ten-acre plantation in Yorkshire, bordering on the fen. The trees had been cut down, and the loose peaty soil bore an enormous crop of wild raspberries, blackberries, and elderberries. The fruit of the wild raspberry ripens late, being in perfection in early September, and hangs on the bushes till the snow falls. This copse attracted all the pheasants in the neighbourhood to eat the fruit, which is such a favourite, not only with birds, but with beasts, that the foxes are said to visit the copse to eat them. The fruits are not large, and are never seen in the market, though much prized by those who have the chance to gather them.

Another fine-flavoured berry of the bramble kind never seems to come to perfection in this country. This is the dewberry, like a blue blackberry with large seeds, growing generally by the waterside. The fruits generally are imperfectly developed, only two or three of the large "seeds" which make up the berry coming to perfection. There is little doubt that the dewberry, like the American blackberry, could be cultivated in gardens, and a fine new fruit added to our store. The parsley-leaved blackberry is now grown in great quantities in market-gardens. It has a very large fruit, and such ornamental and deeply cut leaves as make it a great addition to the garden. Our native wood strawberries are too insignificant to gather; but we have never heard of any one who has planted the Alpine strawberries in the covers and let them run wild. Wild crab-apples, though beautiful to look upon, are almost the only hedgerow fruit which are never gathered, except occasionally to make crab-jelly. The few wild cherries are all eaten by the birds; but there is now a great demand for our wild plums, the pretty but acrid little sloes. Sloe-gin has become fashionable with golfers. Con-

sequently the sloe harvest is more valuable than that of any other English wild fruit, and in years like the present, when plums of all kinds are scarce, they are as dear as damsons. Our wild nuts are not numerous, and of very inferior quality to the garden-grown species. Nevertheless, in the neighbourhood of large woods nutting is a traditional pastime; and in early September, long before they are ripe, whole villages move off on Sunday into the woods to consume this very indigestible and not particularly agreeable dainty. Many of the nutters only go for flirting and fun, but it is amusing to see how seriously the elders take themselves when on these expeditions. Old labourers and their stout wives take baskets and bags and cram them full of hazel-cobs. In the few places where sweet chestnuts come to maturity these are also sought, but are not nearly so popular as the hazelnuts. Probably the liking for the latter dates from a time when labouring men and their children could procure no cheap luxuries of food. Garden fruit has always been neglected except in a few counties, and thus the nuts won an easy reputation. Now that owners of woods are trying so many experiments to procure plants for undergrowth which afford both cover and food, we wonder that the experiment of introducing the American blackberry and the wild raspberry into our woods is not effectively tried. The Alpine strawberry, if planted, would soon assert itself as a wild species, and fill our plantations with good fruit; while the cloudberry might be planted on the wet fringes of the moors. A cold climate has no effect whatever on this hardy little shrub, which though only eight or nine inches high, braves annually the Arctic winter on the tundras, as well as the more temperate climate of Norway.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

MR. LLEWELYN DAVIES ON THE BROAD CHURCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—The remarks in the *Contemporary Review* on which you did me the honour to comment in the *Spectator* of October 2nd were written in some inevitable hurry, and I should like, with your permission, to explain more fully my meaning in the sentence to which you objected, and which I feel open to some objection. To say that the Broad Church has "gone for nothing as an influence on thought" would, if it implied that no valuable thought were due to any member of a party which includes such men as the late Master of Balliol, be indeed absurd. But when we speak of a party what we contemplate is not so much a set of utterances as an intellectual or spiritual impulse commemorated in a definite line of movement. No wise man would allow that some assertion about the Liberal party, for instance, was confuted by any citation from Fox or Romilly, typical Liberals though they were. A party, a school, a church—whatever we call that corporate entity which embodies a spiritual influence from generation to generation—must be judged not by its position at any moment, but by the direction it gives to progress, using that word as I think it always should be used, without any assumption as to truth. Such an entity has almost as measurable a progress as an express train. If we cannot in the same way point out its goal, that is because our train here reaches no terminus; but I think we can see quite as clearly what is being left behind, though no doubt it is difficult for those within and without to agree on a common description of their starting-point. In the case of the Broad Church what is being left behind, surely, is theology. Any one who denies this must, at any rate, exclude from the ranks of this party the distinguished man we have just lost. We have only to cite the names associated with his work to represent a progress in which all theological interest is gradually lost in a remote distance. St. Paul, Plato, Thucydides, the mere names are enough. It is even further from the Greek to the Greek than from the Greek to the Hebrew. Perhaps you would deny that Jowett gives the present position of the Broad Church party, as I denied that Maurice gave its starting-point; each assertion is equally disputable, but the mere fact that any superficial observer would include both names is enough to point out the general direction of a movement with which each has unquestionable connection. However, if we turn from typical teachers to typical doctrines, it seems to me that your own description of the Broad Church proves this to be true. The aims which you, Sir, ascribe to every Broad

Churchman appear to me the aims of every true Christian. "To believe in Christ and follow him, to make of him the centre of spiritual life, the link with the Creator, the supreme authority for conduct,—this," you say, "was the substance and marrow of their faith and teaching." Is there any Christian teaching of which you would *not* say that? You there indicate the most important truths that the human intellect can contemplate, but they are not truths which any one can deny without stultifying his position in a Christian Church, and to say that a body of Churchmen assert what no Churchman can deny is surely to allow that they can *within* the Church produce no intellectual result. You may urge that those who gave a new originality to Christian principles by disintegrating the heterogeneous mass of conviction and prejudice into which these principles had been frozen must have been thinkers, and we must all agree with you. But if you go on to say that their influence has produced a current of thought within the Church, it seems to me that you are confusing the importance and the expansiveness of truth. A set of men who broke through the barriers of a narrow and superstitious theology made room for Christian thought; but if their spiritual descendants contribute no theology of their own, either their place is outside the Church or else their influence is felt in organisation, in Christian work, in Christian life, but not in Christian thought. It is not that the work of the Broad Church is or was unimportant. It may be much more important to unlock a door than to indicate a direction,—that depends on the circumstances of the time. But at all times the two tasks are different, and at most times I believe the same person does not perform both.—I am, Sir, &c.,

JULIA WEDGWOOD.

THE INDIAN FRONTIER POLICY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—I am glad that in the *Spectator* of October 2nd you have expressed your disapproval of the principles of the Forward frontier policy; but will you permit me to explain that "the Standfast school," as you style the school which is opposed to that policy, does not "maintain that we ought never to have gone beyond the Indus"? The frontier which the Standfast—I prefer to call it the Lawrence—school holds, and always has held, to be invulnerable lies miles beyond the Indus, skirting the great mountain barrier which separates the valley of that river from the highlands of Afghanistan. Not a single soldier employed in the defence of that frontier was ever located on the left bank of the Indus. Nor do I agree with you that, because "we have gone so far" beyond that frontier, we cannot now retire, as "the effect of a retreat would be to inflate the vanity of the tribesmen until they might, under its influence, compel us to recommence campaigning, while it would diminish both the energy and the confidence of our Army." Seventeen years ago, at the recommendation of Lord Roberts and Sir Robert Sandeman, we evacuated Afghanistan. The former urged the complete withdrawal of our troops from Cabul, the Kurram and the Khyber Passes; the latter, the abandonment of the Candahar Province. Indeed, Lord Roberts's recommendations went much further; not only would he have "let the web of [Russia's] difficulties extend to the very mouth of the Khyber Pass," but he would have gone "so far as to withdraw all, or nearly all, the European troops from Peshawar, and to reduce the garrison to the lowest possible strength," placing "them in such situations *cis-Indus* as would ensure our having a healthy and serviceable force, fit to take the field at any time of the year."—(See *Afghanistan Blue-book*, No. 1, of 1881, p. 69.) The retreat had no bad effect on the independent tribes; for years they remained perfectly quiet; but that we again began meddling with them, India's resources would not to-day be strained to meet the serious risings of these warlike peoples; and were we to abandon their hills to-morrow, and return to India's natural frontier, there need be no apprehension that they would show any desire to face our Lee-Metfords and Maxims on ground where the advantage would all be on our side. And why the withdrawal of our troops from their present perilous positions—shut up in isolated posts, scattered over a wild and mountainous country, and hemmed in on all sides by enemies of our own creation—to an unassailable frontier should lessen their energy or weaken their confidence is to me incomprehensible. Old soldiers are quick to perceive when they are placed in false positions, and our

present dispositions beyond the Indus are enough to demoralise the best troops in the world, and if, indeed, as you seem to think, the spirit of our Indian Army is not what it used to be, those dispositions lie at the root of the change, and their abandonment must exercise a good, not a bad, effect on its morale.—I am, Sir, &c.,

H. B. HANNA, Colonel.

Ashcroft, Petersfield, October 4th.

[*.* We are reluctantly compelled to hold over all other Letters till next week.]

BOOKS.

MR. TRAILL'S ESSAYS.*

MR. TRAILL has long since earned his reputation as an able and discerning man of letters,—an author who knows men as well as books. We welcome, therefore, with no little pleasure the republication of these literary studies. An essay on Matthew Arnold contains the following criticism:—"I do not find," Mr. Traill writes, "any very convincing ground for the belief that the tastes of any great multitudes of men in this or any other country will ever be powerfully attracted by poetry like that of Mr. Arnold,"—poetry, he adds, which gives pleasure from its form rather than from its essence. But what true poet, whether indebted to form or substance, or to both, ever has given pleasure to "great multitudes of men"? Spenser and Milton, with both substance and form, like Coleridge and Keats, with form alone, have only the fit audience a poet craves, and can never be popular as Martin Tupper once was, and as one or two living verse-makers are now:—

"It seems to me," Mr. Traill says, "almost self-evident that poetry, in order to be popular—and I do not intend the word in any disparaging sense; I merely mean that poetry in order to be the poetry of the many and not of the few—must have something more than the power of delighting the imaginative part of man, it must deeply move his emotional part. The emotions stirred by it may be at any moral level you please, however high or however low; but the stir, the exaltation, must be there."

No doubt all poets of the highest order do stir the emotions profoundly. They satisfy the heart as well as the intellect, they move the passions while they charm the ear, but when have such poets stirred "great multitudes"? when have they secured the "innumerable admirers" gained by versemen like Tupper and his poetical descendants? It is no disparagement, therefore, of Mr. Matthew Arnold to say that he can never be a popular poet; but Mr. Traill, while admiring his best work intensely, gives another reason why he must ever remain the poet of a few:—

"It may sound paradoxical to say of one who was a genuine poet, and on any intelligent estimate of him, a poet of no mean order, that he wrote without the genuine poetic impulse; but there is a sense, I believe, in which every competent critic will understand what I mean. It would be difficult, I think, to point to any poem of Mr. Arnold's in which he is thoroughly possessed by, instead of merely possessing, his subject,—any poem in which feeling and expression are so interfused that the critical and uncritical readers are brought abreast of each other in an equality, though not in an identity, of delighted emotion."

By way of illustrating a statement, which the competent critic is supposed to understand without it, Mr. Traill refers to "The Forsaken Merman," and observes that, "considered as an attempt to give poetic expression to the feelings of the deserted 'King of the Sea,' and to move the reader's sympathies therewith, it is not only a failure, but a failure which trembles throughout upon the verge of the comic." In our judgment the poet's exquisite art not only saves his poem from a suggestion of the comic, but also makes the narrative a success of the kind, though not in the degree, that excites admiration for "Undine." The form of the Merman is left, as it should be, indistinct, but the affection of the Merman in allowing his wife to go up at Eastertime and say her prayers in the little grey church, his vain call to his "dear heart" to come back to the children who are crying for her, and the picture of the human mother stealing to the window and sighing with a heart sorrow-laden for her little golden-haired daughter across the sands, is far indeed from exciting a feeling of the ridiculous. It surely is the reverse of the truth to say that Mr. Arnold merely uses his subject as a canvas on which to paint exquisite marine

* *The New Fiction, and other Essays on Literary Subjects.* By H. D. Traill. London: Hurst and Blackett.