

have made a virtue of restoring the original obsolete spellings, salient capitals, and worrying abbreviations. Mr. Aitken prints his text as he prints his preface, and reserves facsimile for the place where it really does contribute picturesqueness and freshness of colouring, the curious letters of anonymous correspondents, which he prints for the first time from the Blenheim MSS.

It would be difficult to say anything new upon the literary merits of compositions still acknowledged as models, or upon their influence as reformers of the morals and manners which the stage of the period had only corrupted. Perhaps, however, enough notice has not been taken of the improvement of the age itself, independent of the efforts of the moralists. Addison and Steele found public opinion already with them. They would have written to little purpose in the days of Charles the Second. By their time the violent reaction against Puritanism, which had gone so far into the opposite extreme, had spent its force. The stage had already become comparatively decorous. The popularity of Steele's "Christian Hero" had anticipated the popularity of his *Tatler*. The immense vogue of the new periodicals from the first showed how large a public were willing to be amused innocently, and the demand for them at Spalding under the auspices of Mr. Maurice Johnson (the very bibliophile whose Caxtons and Wynkyn de Worde have so recently come to light) proves that the same feeling pervaded the country. Not only were manners purer, but political and religious animosities were less accentuated. Sir Roger de Coverley and Sir Andrew Freeport could hardly have met on such civil terms in the previous generation; nor could the pretty young Quakeress (*Spectator*, Dec. 10, 1714) have been sketched so charmingly when it would have been Mr. *Spectator*'s duty to procure her commitment to gaol. The great number of imitations all over the Continent denotes a similar development of morality and civility throughout Europe. The multitude of German imitations in particular is surprising, and seems to indicate that the English language was better known, and English literature more influential in contemporary Germany than we have been accustomed to believe. England certainly did not reciprocate.

But if Addison and Steele were the children of their day, their genius was their own. They were original without effort or display. They created a new style of composition, the germs of which, indeed, they found in their predecessors, but which before them had no proper existence. It is true that their charm consists mainly in felicity of diction and nicety of observation; they do not, any more than Pope, achieve greatness; but they do, like him, achieve perfection. In one department, indeed, Addison may claim to be an innovator. His literary criticism, especially of "Paradise Lost" and "Chevy Chase," is far above the level of his contemporaries; if less weighty, it is more delicate than Dryden's.

Mr. Aitken's commentary is like his text, perfect in its simplicity. It might have been considerably extended without gaining much in value. It might, for instance, have been observed that, as none of the initials in No. 396 of the *Spectator* will fit the persons identified with them, they are probably a blind; and if so, evince the wish of Addison, who edited though he did not write the essay, to avoid personalities. The typography is in general most correct; we have, however, met with one amusing error in vol. ii., p. 56—Charles Leslie, the conjurer, for nonjuror.

R. GARNETT.

MR. CROCKETT'S FRESH EXPERIMENT.*

Mr. Crockett is bound to take a new departure one of these days; his exuberant and quite modern life cannot be for ever employed in filling the old bottles of historical romance. It is possible that either "Cleg Kelly" or "Ione March"—"Cleg Kelly" for choice—indicates what direction that departure will take. Meantime "Ione March" has come, and a most delightful, vigorous, and provoking story it is. For, of course, Mr. Crockett being wilful will blunder, and has blundered in every story he has yet written. Here he errs in seeking—to use modern ecclesiastical slang—to be too "comprehensive." He must needs utilise the latest craze or crotchet of the day. So he wastes some thirty pages and the time of the readers who appreciate him most over faith-healing and the preposterous sect founded by Mrs. Forsaker Hardy, who has far too much money, and not knowing what to do with it, takes to dabbling in

the supernatural and scandal-mongering. There is a suspicion, too, of artificiality, if not of "science falsely so-called" in the year's torture inflicted on Ione March because a great physician has made a great blunder in diagnosis, and has left out of consideration the possibility of maternity proving more than a match for pernicious anæmia. Otherwise the book is full of genuine, and, indeed, "rattling" life. Mr. Crockett is always successful with his contrasts in character. He never was more successful than he is here. His two girls, Ione March and Idalia Judd—in spite of the appalling amount of slang that Idalia has acquired—are English or Scotch rather than American, even although the one is the daughter of John Cyrus Judd, the millionaire, and the other is the daughter of Henry Quincy March, Governor of the State of Callibraska. But the seriousness of Ione, which is all needed to enable her to fight poverty and misery, makes a capital foil to Idalia's piquancy and light-heartedness. Marcus Hardy, too, a warm-hearted giant of the Kingsleyan type, is an equally good contrast to Keith Harford, the retiring and rather limp poet. As for Kearney Judd, the cur and scoundrel of the story, who because Ione throws him over seeks to ruin her father, he receives his deserts at the hands—and knuckles—of that American Tom Brown, Seth Livingstone. Excepting, too, for the wearisome passage already mentioned, the story is alive from the start in Switzerland to the almost too pathetic and yet not unhappy close. It is evident that Mr. Crockett has made a very close study of the possibilities of making a livelihood that are open to artistic sentimentalists like Ione and Keith. "Ione March" is as a novel a decided success, and will please the legion of readers who in an age that is given over to athletics—and it might be given over to worse things—are devoted to vigour in fiction that is not too wildly improbable. Why should not Mr. Crockett seek to occupy the seat between Mr. Hall Caine and Mr. W. E. Norris that is at present vacant?

WILLIAM WALLACE.

NATURALISM AND AGNOSTICISM.*

Out of the lengthening row of volumes for whose production the Gifford bequest is responsible, these are among the few which serve to justify the existence of the trust. Dr. Ward's lectures cannot in any sense be called popular, and the subject is one not easily made intelligible to those who have not had some training in philosophy; but to those acquainted with the modern literature bearing on the fundamental problems on which all attempts to formulate a philosophy of religion must be based, they will well repay the trouble and concentrated attention which their perusal requires.

The thesis is the examination of certain assumptions made by modern writers on science, on which are based (1) the mechanical theory of the Universe; (2) the theory of evolution, and (3) the relations of psychical to physical and physiological phenomena. Dr. Ward's standpoint is that of idealism, and the goal towards which he leads is that of a spiritualistic monism. Naturalism he defines as the theory of the Universe that separates Nature from God and subordinates spirit to matter, setting up unchangeable law as supreme. This philosophy is synthetic, its three component principles being (1) that nature is resolvable into a vast mechanism; (2) that this mechanism works out in evolution; and (3) that mental phenomena may accompany, but do not determine, the interactions in the material world. Agnosticism is in a sense what may be called the religion correlative to this philosophy, and the central article in its creed is that knowledge cannot transcend the phenomenal, and that ultimate questions concerning what is beyond the phenomenal lie outside the limits of philosophical inquiry. On this creed and especially on the use of the word "phenomena" by naturalistic writers there are some excellent criticisms in the last lecture.

The first volume is devoted to the examination of the mechanical theory, and of evolution as expounded by Spencer. It is a powerful piece of destructive criticism, and a model of logical method and clear analysis. To one whose work lies in the study of phenomena, either in the field or the laboratory, the chapters are helpful, refreshing, and profitable, even though one has to make his way through an "appalling wreckage of rejected theories."

The ultimate analysis of the modern views of the mechanical

* "Naturalism and Agnosticism." The Gifford Lectures, delivered before the University of Aberdeen, 1895-1898. By Professor: James Ward, Sc.D., of Cambridge. (London: A. and C. Black, 1899.) 2 vols., pp. 594. 18s.

* "Ione March." By S. R. Crockett. 6s. (Hodder and Stoughton.)