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stand the Scriptures, and know that it was written that the Christ should suffer and rise again the third day, and only so enter into His glory (Luke xxiv. 45, 46). As yet it was "at the first," when they could not understand these things; but "when Jesus was glorified," "then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him" (John xii. 16).

BENJ. B. WARFIELD.

BLAISE PASCAL.

(*Continued from p.* 320.)

WE pass over the interesting episode of his sister Jacqueline, and the gradual steps by which, after being caressed and distinguished in the best circles of society, she ultimately retired to the seclusion of Port Royal, and spent the rest of her life in its most austere observances. Not that this episode has not features of great interest —among others, the aspect in which it places one section at least of Parisian society. The circle of Port Royal came to be composed of many men in France of birth, position, and learning. Racine studied there, and Corneille was an old companion of Pascal. It was considered at the time that, in point of learning, the Port Royalists eclipsed the Jesuits. Yet these men, strong in their faith, were not found wanting when the time of trial came; and not only were they willing to renounce all the attractions of a world which had open arms to receive them, but they were ready to meet and resist the tide of persecution. That their convictions were sincere, although we may think them in part at least erroneous, cannot be doubted, and sincere conviction is not so common that we can afford to treat it otherwise than with respect.

But there was one man of the Port Royal brotherhood

whose name brings us back to our proper theme. Arnauld was the last of twenty children of the Parliamentary leader and orator of that name. He had steadily supported the views of Jansen, and in 1643 published a work on "Frequent Communion," which was decidedly adverse to the Jesuits. He was also the author of two separate treatises in defence of Jansen. Jansen's great work *Augustinus* filled the Jesuit party with acrimony, and after a variety of efforts to that end, they succeeded in obtaining a Papal Bull, condemning the book, in 1643. The condemnation proceeded on five propositions said to be heretical, and said to be contained in Jansen's book. It would be out of place here to enter on any sort of discussion on the special points on which the Jesuits demanded, and the Pope granted, the Bull of condemnation. It would be impossible to engage on any such field, without a much larger inroad on our readers' notice. Our only object in this recapitulation has been to explain the position of matters when Pascal next appears upon the scene, and that object will probably be accomplished by quoting the five propositions said to be heretical, which the Jesuits and the Pope said they had discovered in Jansen's book:—

"1. There are Divine precepts, which good men, though willing, are unable to obey.

"2. No person, in this corrupt state of nature, can resist the influence of Divine grace.

"3. In order to render human actions meritorious, or otherwise, it is not requisite that they be exempt from necessity, but only free from constraint.

"4. The semi-Pelagian heresy consisted in allowing the human will to be endued with a power of resisting grace, or of complying with its influence.

"5. Whoever says that Christ died or shed His blood, for all mankind, is a semi-Pelagian."

Such were the propositions; and it is easy to see by their

nature that they touch some of the most abstruse questions of dogmatic theology. Having succeeded in obtaining the Papal condemnation, the Jesuits made rancorous use of it against all suspected Jansenists by very violent and very insidious proceedings.

Pascal was recalled from Auvergne to Paris by Jacqueline's determination to enter Port Royal, which, after much dissuasion from her father and mother, they ultimately consented to her doing. We stumbled the other day, in a volume of the *Scots' Magazine* (vol. xvii.), upon an article comparing Pascal and Lord Kames, in which the writer, manifestly prejudiced against evangelical Christianity, denounces Pascal as a fanatic, because he compelled his sister in the flower of her youth to join the recluses of Port Royal. It was a singular comparison in any view, but unfortunately for the critic, there is no foundation whatever for the only point of contrast on which he dwells. He was so little instructed on the real position which Pascal occupied, that he says nothing of the *Provincial Letters*, and nothing of the *Thoughts*. He represents Pascal as pressing upon his sister a step which he took every means to prevent. At that time Pascal was so far from being given up to religious enthusiasm, that this event occurred at the period when he lived most in the world, and seemed for a time to have lost hold of the impressions of his early manhood. He continued his life of pleasure for four or five succeeding years. His ready wit, joined with his solid acquirements, made him a charming companion. He had a prodigious memory, mainly for facts or for ascertained truth, and a singular and almost unique instinct of divining results from very slender postules. According to St. Beuve, the most detailed of his biographers, while his mathematical reading was profound, his literary studies had been unmethodical and desultory. But still there were few branches of know-

ledge of which he was not master. Apparently from the time he regained his health in 1649, he lived the life of a man of society in Paris, in company with other young men of his own age, his principal companion being the young Duc de Roannez, who was his familiar friend. His father died in 1651, and left his son sufficiently provided for to enable him to continue, as he did, his life of ease and pleasure in society. The friendship of the Duc de Roannez did not end with Pascal's career in the gay world. St. Beuve says that M. de Saci, who became Pascal's director at Port Royal, introduces Pascal, on his first arrival at Port Royal, in a light wholly unexpected. He says of him, that he was greatly in repute in the fashionable world, full of amusing pleasantries, of great conversational powers, a man who had read all sorts of books, and who willingly discoursed of them. He represented him as "*presque à la mode encore, et un vrai bel esprit, en regard de M. de Saci, qui en tire mille etincelles.*"

The detractors of Pascal are fond of suggesting that during this period he led a dissolute life, but we have found nothing in our researches which lends colour to the imputation. Bayle, the author of the Dictionary, who is ever ready to recount scandal, gives the imputation a flat denial. That he led a thoughtless, unprofitable life of self-pleasing, dissipating his serious thoughts and earlier religious impressions in a round of frivolity with the chance companions of the hour, is quite true; and is, we think, quite sufficient to account for the expressions used by him afterwards.

Too much ingenuity has, we think, been displayed in the search for a motive for the next, and the most important, step of his life. About 1654 Pascal, who had contracted some intimacy with the inmates of Port Royal, had latterly held aloof from them, when all of a sudden he resolved to withdraw himself from the world, and to seek, in the retirement of Port Royal, the peace of mind which he seems

to have lost. Nothing could be more natural than for a man of Pascal's intellectual and moral intensity, finding himself drifting further and further from the standard which in happier days he had endeavoured to attain, under influences which he felt himself powerless to resist, resolving to end the conflict by quitting the scene of his temptations. Indeed this fact illustrates one peculiarity of Pascal's temperament. He was one of those who find themselves feeble to resist the attractions of the world without some countervailing excitement. We do not doubt that such was the real spring which led to Pascal's ultimate resolve to spend the rest of his days in Port Royal. He knew his own infirmities, and he found in the austerities of that retreat, and, as we have already remarked, even in his tortures, that amount of counter irritation which enabled him to pursue the tenour of his religious contemplation.

The theory that this sudden revolution was due to an accident which happened to him while driving in a carriage and four, when the fear of death was strong on him, wants confirmation; and we have great doubts of its accuracy. The incident is no doubt true, but Pascal never referred to it in that sense. It rather seems to have been suggested as the cause of his sudden change of life, by those who were sceptical of the power or the reality of religious conviction, and were in search for some singular or remarkable event to lead to so complete a retirement from the world. But Pascal was a man whose mind had already been impressed deeply by religious conviction, and who seems to have felt his faith being daily more and more entangled in the meshes of the gay world. Contempt for the unreality and unworthiness of the part he was playing would grow day by day; and it needed not a great but a slight cause to account for his resolution. To Port Royal accordingly he went. He placed himself under the direction of M. de Saci, a man of ability, and

after some months of occasional residence in Paris, he spent the remainder of his life in the exercise of the not inconsiderable austerities of the order. In the *Pensées* we find ample corroboration of this estimate of the impulses which led Pascal to this resolution; to which we may add the fact that two of his companions, the Duc de Roannez and M. Domat, the celebrated jurist, joined him at Port Royal. As these were not in the carriage accident, that event could not have been their inducement to join the fraternity at Port Royal; and this seems to indicate that some of the circle in which he lived had been impressed with serious views before he abruptly left them.

It was certainly a singular concurrence of events which led Pascal to Port Royal at this particular juncture. The Pope had all along allowed a rather undignified struggle to go on between the extreme Jesuits and the more moderate parties. He had condemned the five propositions already referred to; but to what extent this condemnation would be acted on in France, remained for some time doubtful. The Jesuits were not inclined to press the matter; but a certain Father Aunat brought the subject of Arnauld's letters before the Sorbonne, and it was feared that Arnauld might be visited by personal consequences. A meeting of Arnauld's friends was held, at which Pascal was present, to concert measures in defence. Arnauld stated his own views, which he had proposed to publish. The meeting, however, thought that Arnauld's learned and dry logic would produce no effect, and Arnauld at last turned to Pascal and asked him whether he, as a younger man, would not try his hand at a reply? Pascal said that he thought it was vain to argue with the Sorbonne, and that they could not be convinced, and that they should appeal to the public and write for them. Next day he brought to his friend the manuscript of the first *Provincial Letter*. Arnauld at once perceived that this was exactly

what was desired. It was printed anonymously, and published on the 29th January, 1656. Other letters to the number of eighteen in all followed at short intervals in the course of the next fourteen months.

The effect was prodigious. First Paris, then France, then Europe, rung with applause, and looked forward to the next *Provincial* as the amusement and topic of the day. No reply came or at least was attended to, for in the midst of the universal merriment no reply was possible. The Jesuits, instead of remaining the haughty masters of the position, suddenly found themselves exhibited to be laughed at by a very wide public circle, month after month. The chorus of applause went on to the end. The *Petits Lettres*, as they were called, became a French classic. There was announced in a book catalogue of last year a copy of the *Provincial Letters* in four different languages—French, Italian, Latin, and Spanish—under the date 1684. The Jesuits themselves, angry as they were, could not resist the spell, and were as anxious as the rest to get copies as they came out. The clergy, generally, seemed quite excited upon the subject. On the 31st January, 1656, on the day on which Arnauld's book was censured by the Sorbonne, M. St. Amour, writing to M. Arnauld, says of the first letter: "The letter of a Provincial has done wonders. It was read in the hall after dinner. It irritated M. Morel, M. Duchesne was greatly diverted, and the old Penitentiar went into fits of laughter over it."

It is very difficult to analyse the peculiar charm of the *Provincial Letters*. They profess to be letters written to a friend in the country in regard to this turmoil as to Jansen and his book "Augustinus." The man in the provinces wants to know what it is all about, and his friend in town sends him reports of imaginary conversations he has had with sundry Jesuits and Jansenists, to satisfy his curiosity. The main element of humour, the strain of which is kept

up throughout, consists of the absurd shifts to which the imaginary Jesuit is put to maintain his propositions, and the quiet grotesqueness with which he is made to stumble into the pitfalls prepared for him. No translation can in this respect do any justice to the original. For the French language admits of suppressed suggestion so much more effectively than ours, that what is decorous in one may sometimes seem coarse or even profane in the other. It is remarkable that the *Provincial Letters* were almost the first prose composition of that nature in the French language. The style has a close resemblance in brightness and humour to Molière's dialogue in his comedies, and Pascal, who was his contemporary, probably acquired it in the same circles. Voltaire said of it that the *Provincials* had fixed the language, and afforded a standard for the future. And, indeed, such has been the verdict of the world ever since.

But although the style of humour attracted readers, the quality which really gave force and weight to them was the adroit and masterly manner in which the underlying argument is implied and suggested. The result was, that casuistry in its old form, at all events for a considerable period, seemed to be utterly exorcised; and although between denial that such dogmas were ever held by the Jesuits, and the re-assertion of them in different phraseology and in a different garb, there may have been an attempt to breathe fresh life into it, since that thunderbolt was launched from Pascal's hand it has never recovered its old ascendancy.

Thus Pascal, retreating in search of obscurity to the shades of Port Royal, acquired by this almost fortuitous exercise of his powers a reputation, posthumous, it is true, of which he could not have dreamed. The first three letters were simply anonymous. The rest were published under the pseudonym of Louis de Montalte. A very active search

was at first made for the true author, for to laugh at the Jesuits was no trifle in those days. But Pascal's authorship was never discovered or avowed during his life. M. Nicole, a well-known scholar of the time, and one who had aided Pascal in preparing the letters, revised an edition of the work, in the preface to which he says, that the great applause and universal approbation with which these letters were received in France, arose mainly from the fact that the Jesuits and their doctrines were comparatively little known amongst the people. No attempt at a reply, at least none the name of which is remembered, was made for forty years, but in 1697, a Father Daniel published a reply, in which he accused the author of the *Provincials* with having misquoted and falsified the authorities on which he founded. But the allegation, although in some unimportant details it may seem to have a colour of foundation, has never been substantiated, and in any view came a great deal too late. If there had been any solid foundation for it, it would have been adduced when the popularity of the letters was fresh.

Of this celebrated work, it is impossible to give an epitome which shall convey any true impression of the vigour of the original.

It must be remembered however, first, that this was not a quarrel between Catholic and Protestant, but was wholly within the Roman Catholic Church. Our own sympathies, it is true, are with the Jansenist or Augustinian section, because they come nearer the Calvinistic standard. On the subject matter of the *Provincial Letters* and the five propositions, we should probably not agree with either side. Secondly, although those propositions and the disputes which arose out of them, relate to some of the most sacred and solemn theological themes, in reading the *Provincials*, we become so identified with the disputants—Father Bauny and his antagonist are so realistically described—that we fail to have any feeling of levity evoked by the rejoinders

in the course of the dialogue. Pascal was himself accused of irreverence in his way of dealing with topics so grave. He answered in the words of Horace, *Ridentem dicere verum, quid vetat?* He said, "I wished my book to be read, and so I tried to make it readable. I wished it to be read, not by doctors of the Sorbonne, but by the public, by women, and by the whole church, and I succeeded."

In fact, the controversy as to the five propositions condemned by the Pope, had a humorous complexion to start with. They were not the propositions of Jansen; they were the propositions which Father Cornet, a Jesuit, said he had found in Jansen's book. We believe Pascal was quite right when he said, that no one else could find them there; but the Pope had said they were there, and that not only was it heretical to hold these opinions, but that it was heresy to say they were not in Jansen's book; and the Pope, said the Jesuits, is infallible. True, replied the Jansenist, he is so as to doctrine, but as to matters of fact he may be misled, and if these propositions are not in Jansen's book, and no one has ever found them there, no Pope could alter the fact. Thus it is related that when Pascal undertook the task, he said he would endeavour to show it was only a dispute about words. It is, however, quite a different matter to judge of these smart sayings by sample, and to detach them from the dialogue they are intended to illustrate; so that for a full appreciation of the performance, the original must be referred to.

Dr. McCrie, whose translation of the *Provincials* is a very scholarly and admirable work, thus summarises in his Introduction the general scope and scheme of the letters. "The first three letters refer to Arnauld's affair; the questions of grace are but slightly touched, the main object being to interest the reader in favour of the Jansenists, and excite his contempt and indignation against his opponents. After this prelude, the fourth letter serves as a transition to the follow-

ing six, in which he takes up the maxims of the Casuists. In the eight concluding letters he resumes the grand objects of the work—the morals of the Jesuits, and the question of grace. The three parts have each their peculiar style. The first is distinguished for lively dialogue and repartee—Jacobins, Molinists, and Jansenists are brought on the stage, and speak in character, while Pascal does little more than act as reporter. In the second part he comes into contact with a casuistical Doctor, and extracts from him, under pretext of desiring information, some of the weakest and the worst of his maxims. At the eleventh letter, Pascal throws off his disguise, and addressing himself directly to the whole order of the Jesuits, and to their Provincial by name, he pours out his whole soul in an impetuous and impassioned torrent of declamation. From beginning to end it is a well sustained battle, in which the weapons are only changed in order to strike the harder" (p. 53).

But the javelin launched by Pascal's hand hit its mark. His foes were overwhelmed. St. Beuve, in the work to which I have already referred, says: "If the Jesuits are ever again expelled from France, the decree will have been pronounced by Pascal."

Of Pascal's personal history there is not much more to record. He never left Port Royal. In the year after the publication of the *Provincial Letters*, in 1658, he had a recurrence of his former malady, from which he never again recovered. He remained in his retreat, surrendering all his worldly possessions, conforming faithfully to the austere regulations of the institution, and enduring very intense bodily sufferings with a patient, childlike, and even cheerful resignation. His view, often expressed, was that the love of God was the chief good and the only felicity worth striving after; and his life bore testimony to the entire sincerity of his conviction.

One or two episodes occurred in the Port Royal com-

munity in the interval between 1638, and 1662, when he died; but they are not of sufficient interest or moment to lead us to dwell on them in detail. One was a difference of opinion between Pascal and Arnauld as to whether the nuns of Port Royal should sign a certain modified renunciation of the Five Propositions—Pascal was strongly of opinion that they should not; but this would lead us into the history of Port Royal, for which we have no space. The other, of more importance, was the supposed cure of Pascal's niece by a miracle worked by a thorn said to have been taken from our Saviour's crown of thorns. That Pascal had faith in modern miracles we have already said; that a sudden improvement in the patient's condition was coincident with the application of the thorn seems to be true; but these things fall very far short of the conclusion reached by Pascal. He, however, did consider them as an indication of the Divine favour, and threw aside all other avocations to devote himself to religious exercises and meditation. He died on the 16th of August, 1662, falling asleep without pain or struggle, and as placidly as a child.

The other work on which Pascal's literary fame rests is of a very different character from the *Provincial Letters*. After his death there were found a large number of detached MSS.—some fragmentary, and some more carefully composed, and more complete—of the nature of Reflections on Religion and on Life. It is known that Pascal at one time meditated the composition of an Apology, or Defence, of the Christian Religion; and there is little doubt that these were meant to find their place in a systematic treatise. But the state of his health for the last four years of his life seems to have prevented the completion of the design; and accordingly we have only the disjointed fragments of a colossal fabric, fitted together as the views of each separate editor might suggest, without any certainty as to the true intent of the author. But in whatever order these noble

Thoughts are placed relatively to each other, we do not know a more impressive collection in the whole circle of European literature.

There has been, as might be expected, a good deal of controversy among critics as to the editing of these valuable remains. The first editions were certainly to some extent manipulated—some things interpolated, and some suppressed, without any warrant from the author or any indication of his intention. This arose not from any want of fidelity on the part of those to whom they were entrusted, but from the fear of compromising the living through the opinions of the departed. Even, however, without any presupposed method, these scattered pages are magnificent. The mingled gentleness and loftiness, the deep spiritual ardour in combination with the most intimate and acute knowledge of the world, the scorn and the tenderness, the precision and the eloquence which they display, disclose a mind and an intellect rarely surpassed. However therefore the materials may be arranged, the order of the author's design is not doubtful. Proposing to himself to compose a comprehensive work, showing forth, first, man's need of redemption; and secondly, the truth, adequacy, and sufficiency of the Gospel scheme, through all the different stages; he commences by showing in vivid colours the actual position of man on the earth. He describes, after some introductory pages, the disproportion of man—his diversion, his greatness, and his littleness; the deceptions of his imagination; his justice, customs, and prejudices; his weakness, unrest, and defects. From these he draws the conclusion that some element has marred the primæval object with which this being was created—so grand and yet so mean, so intent on happiness and yet so powerless to obtain it. And having with a wonderfully graphic power gathered together the various features of this striking though depressing picture, he turns to the reverse; and shows how,

through the Jewish dispensation, the types, the prophecies, the miracles, and lastly the coming of the Saviour, the balance was to be at last redressed. As the author never, in point of fact, presented to the world even the outline of such a scheme, it is difficult to criticise it as a completed work, or even as the commencement of one. Pascal had only collected the materials, and we cannot tell what he would have used or what discarded. But what a rich treasure they are, even as they lie, where they were thrown down at random; a collection of precious gems, well fitted to adorn the projected palace.

It would be in vain for us to attempt, within any reasonable compass, to give any appreciable outline of this rare and admirable work. We shall only subjoin a few of his reflections on ethics, which, although apparently desultory, all converge on the general plan we have described; and they may serve as an example of the earnest and vigorous spirit which pervades the rest.

In his General Introduction he thus opens the first part of his theme:—

"We need no great elevation of soul to understand that here is no true and solid satisfaction; that all our pleasures are but vanity, our evils infinite; and lastly, that death, which threatens us every moment, must infallibly and within a few years place us in the dread alternative of being for ever either annihilated or wretched."

"Nothing is more real than this, nothing more terrible. Brave it out as we may, that is the end which awaits the fairest life in the world. Let us reflect on this, and then say if it be not certain that there is no good in this life save in the hope of another; that we are happy only in proportion as we approach it, and that as there is no more sorrow for those who have an entire assurance of eternity, so there is no happiness for those who have not a ray of light."

"Assuredly then it is a great evil to be in doubt; but it is at least an indispensable duty to seek when we are in such doubt; he, therefore, who doubts and yet seeks not, is at once thoroughly unhappy, and thoroughly unfair. And if at the same time he be easy and content, profess to be so, and in fact pride himself thereon; if it even be this very condition of doubt which forms the subject of his joy and boasting, I have no terms in which to describe a creature so extravagant."

This is the keynote which he proceeds to follow up in this first part. He goes on to say, "Nothing is so important to man as his condition—nothing so formidable to him as eternity—and thus it is not natural that there should be men indifferent to the loss of their being, and the peril of endless woe. They are quite other men in regard to all else; they fear the veriest trifles; they foresee them; they feel them; and the very man who spends so many days and nights in rage and despair for the loss of office, or for some imaginary insult to his honour, is the same who without disquiet and without emotion knows that he must lose all by death."

He goes on to consider "Man's Disproportion," meaning man's inadequacy to fill fully, or comprehend accurately, the position in which he finds himself. "For after all," he says, "what is man in nature. A nothing in regard to the infinite; a whole in regard to nothing; a mean between nothing and the whole; infinitely removed from understanding either extreme. The end of things and their beginnings are invincibly hid from him in impenetrable secrecy; he is equally incapable of seeing the nothing from which he was taken, and the infinite in which he is engulfed."[1]

This leads the moralist to say a few very weighty

[1] These quotations are taken from a very able translation of the *Pensées*, lately published by Kegan Paul & Co., of London.

sentences in regard to the aspirations of science to ascertain the origin of the present order of the world.

He says that "of the two infinities, of greatness and of littleness, that the first is most obvious to the senses; but that it is impossible to know and prove it; the infinite multitude of things being so hidden that all we can express by word or thought is but an invisible trace of them. Hence it is plain how foolish, vain and ignorant is that title of some books, *de omni scibili*—of everything knowable."

"But the infinitely little is far less evident. Philosophers have much more frequently asserted that they have attained it; yet in that very point they have all stumbled. This has given occasion for such common titles as The Origin of Creation, The Principles of Philosophy, and the like, as presumptuous in fact, although not in appearance, as that dazzling one, *de omni scibili*."

These are the words of a man in the front rank, and before his age, in the profundity of his scientific attainments. He says, farther on,—

"If man were to begin with the study of himself, he would see how incapable he is of proceeding farther. How can a part know the whole? But he may perhaps aspire to know at least the parts with which he has proportionate relation. But the parts of the world are so linked and related that I think it impossible to know one without another or without the whole." And farther on he repeats, "I hold it impossible to know one alone without all the others; that is to say, impossible purely and absolutely."

In these few sentences we think we have a rule or canon which seems effectually to bar the way against scepticism founded on scientific discovery. The answer is, we may know this fact in some of its relations, but we cannot know it in all; and until we can, we are incapable of forming any conclusion as to its true or universal import. There is

something almost prophetic in these utterances of Pascal. But he continues, "It is impossible that our reasoning part should be other than spiritual; and should any allege that we are simply material, this would far more exclude us from the knowledge of things, since it is an inconceivable paradox to affirm that matter can know itself, and it is not possible for us to know how it should know itself."

"Let us conceive then that this mixture of spirit and clay throws us out of proportion. Hence it comes that almost all philosophers have confounded different ideas, and speak of material things in spiritual phrase. For they say boldly that bodies have a tendency to fall, that they seek after their centre, that they fear a void, that they have inclinations, sympathies, antipathies; and all of these are spiritual qualities."

We are not without daily examples of the same misnomers. Nor are they ever resorted to excepting for an object; to cover theories which, true or false, do not admit of demonstration. Pascal sums up this matter thus, as his experience in his investigations into science.

"The sciences have two extremes which meet. The first is that pure natural ignorance in which every man is born. The other extreme is that reached by great minds, who having run through all that men can know, find that they know nothing, and again come round to the same ignorance from which they started; but this is a learned ignorance, conscious of itself. Those between the two, who have left their natural ignorance, and not been able to reach the other, have some tincture of this vain knowledge, and assume to be wise. These trouble the world, and judge all things falsely."

Pascal did not disparage science—in fact, he continued his scientific pursuits to the end of his life. But he resented what he considered the trespass of science beyond its true bounds, and its intrusion into regions which are far beyond

and above it. Des Cartes' philosophy was what he had in his mind.

We might fill many pages, not unpleasantly or unprofitably, with further extracts from this valuable treasury.

On man's need for diversion or distraction, he says, that "Man has two instincts,—one to look for occupation from without, and the other to be at rest. Between these two rolls all our life away. We seek repose by resistance to obstacles, and so soon as these are surmounted, repose becomes intolerable. For we think either on the miseries we feel, or on those we fear. And even when we feel sheltered on all sides, weariness, of its own accord, will spring from the depths of the heart wherein are its natural roots, and fill the soul with its poison."

We pass by the very beautiful chapters on the greatness of man, on his imagination, on his weakness, unrest, and defects, and conclude our imperfect summary by this noble apostrophe to the philosophers.

"Know then, proud man, how great a paradox thou art to thyself. Bow down thyself, weak reason; be silent, thou foolish nature; learn that man is altogether incomprehensible by man, and learn from your Master your true condition which you ignore. Hear God."

"For in a word had man never been corrupt, he would innocently and securely enjoy truth and happiness. And had man never been otherwise than corrupt, he would have no idea of virtue or blessedness. But wretched as we are, and even more than if there were no greatness in our condition, we have an idea of happiness and cannot attain it; we feel an image of truth, and possess a lie only, alike incapable of absolute ignorance and of certain knowledge, so manifest is it that we once were in a degree of perfection from which we have unhappily fallen."

Such are a few gleanings from this almost inexhaustible storehouse of wisdom. We can conceive no better pre-

servative against some of the prevalent tendencies of the day, than the study of these interesting aphorisms. They are so real, so genuine, and go so deep into the springs of human action. The spirit which breathes throughout is so thoroughly evangelical; and probably it was this very feature which delayed the publication for eight years, and then led to the careful editing, qualification and interpolation which the text underwent. For the one deadly accusation against the author of the *Provincial Letters* was that he was a Calvinist; and that substantially was a crime against the State.

We find accordingly in these *Thoughts* one reference to confession, some words on the Pope's authority, not unmixed with misgivings that it might become tyrannical, some very hearty denunciations of schisms and Calvinists, but the staple of his *Thoughts* is evangelical both in words and in spirit, breathing the true doctrine of the Reformation in its breadth and power.

Such, faintly sketched, was the noble character of Pascal. To us it seems hard that so great a spirit should have been enclosed in so frail an earthly tenement. We cannot help imagining that had he been blest with health and length of days, his almost miraculous endowments might have done priceless service to mankind and to true religion. But we must be thankful for the footsteps he has left behind him, and learn the lesson which they teach.

We conclude with these singular and touching words with which he ends one of the chapters of his *Thoughts.*

"I love poverty, because He loved it. I love wealth, because it gives the power of helping the miserable. I keep my troth to every one, rendering not evil to those who do me wrong; but I wish them a lot like mine, in which I receive neither good nor evil from men. I try to be just, true, sincere and faithful to all men; I have a tender heart for those to whom God has more closely bound me; and whether I

am alone, or seen of men, I place all my actions in the sight of God, who shall judge them, and to whom I have consecrated them all."

"Such are my opinions, and each day of my life I bless my Redeemer, who has transformed me, a man full of weakness, misery, and lust, of pride and ambition, into a man exempt from all these evils, by the power of His grace, to which all the glory is due; since of myself I have only misery and sin."

MONCREIFF.

THE REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

A CRITICAL ESTIMATE.

FOURTH PAPER.

CASES of "literalism" and "obscurity" in the English of the R.V. have been sufficiently dealt with. This Paper will tabulate instances where we think that an obsolete, or imperfect interpretation of the Hebrew has received the Revisers' suffrage. The writers may remark at the outset that they have re-examined (often independently of each other) well nigh every hard passage in the Hebrew Bible. They have arrived at the same decision in quite nineteen cases out of twenty. It is their misfortune to find, on turning to the R.V., about a third of what seemed unassailable translations, not exhibited in the text, but "*skied*" in a marginal annotation. In self-defence they again draw the reader's attention to the fact that a two-thirds majority was required before the Revisers could emend an A.V. mistranslation.

Gen. xxxvii. 3. Joseph's "*coat of many colours*" remains. We know no better reason for attaching this sense to