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after Sunday, and year after year, so long as the circumstances of the parish allow of it. These seem to be the conditions and the limitations of pew-reform. The Parish Churches Bill is, I venture to think, at once futile and mischievous; futile because it is vague and hesitating where it should have been precise, and mischievous because it makes sweeping changes where none are required.

LEWIS T. DIBDIN.

ART. III.—AMIEL'S "JOURNAL INTIME."

THERE has grown up among us within the last century a class of literary production which is altogether new, yet full of a deep personal interest and importance, and which we cannot afford to disregard. It has been justly named "The Literature of Introspection." Quietly yet steadily it has made its way in our midst, though few have marked its progress; Obermann, De Senancour, Eugénie and Maurice de Guérin, have made those familiar with it who, led by chance or by sympathy, have touched upon their work. Mr. Shorthouse, quite lately among ourselves, contributed a most important monograph to swell its ranks, in the person of "John Inglesant." But it has remained for an obscure Genevese Professor to startle the thinking world with a work far higher in merit than "John Inglesant," though as yet not well known to the majority of readers.

The "Journal Intime" of Henri Frédéric Amiel is a revelation not only to the public at large, but even to his most intimate friends who undertook to give it to the world. Published necessarily after his death, and, with the exception of a few scattered "thoughts," jealously guarded from every eye until then, it has proved its claim to be one of those gems set apart in the history of culture and philosophy as belonging to that new "Literature of Introspection."

Our English taste does not, as a rule, bend in the direction of abstract philosophies; but we need not be precluded from the sorrowful enjoyment afforded us by Amiel's "Journal Intime." It is well for us, as a nation, that our natures are too vigorous, our tastes too positive, our minds too objective, to be in danger of falling into Amiel's mistake; the mistake to which he sacrificed all his hopes, all his happiness. For the history of Amiel as shown by himself, as told to us in a very small degree by his friends, is from first to last summed up in a very few words. It was a forlorn search after the ideal. M. Scherer, in the sketch of his friend which serves as preface to the

book, has termed him a "a martyr to the ideal." Such indeed he was. Were it not for the pages of his journal, it is probable that Amiel would never have existed for the outer world at all. Even among his intimate friends—conscious as they were of a latent power in him which they longed to call into action—his depth of thought and feeling were hardly suspected. To them he was the brilliant, joyous, affectionate, dearly loved, and cherished friend, with a reserve of genius which he refused to develope, and a possibility of influence which he provokingly declined to use except in a very limited degree. Of his darker days, his conflicts, his yearning, his unutterable sense of failure, they knew comparatively nothing. We must therefore learn to judge him chiefly from the pages of his inner life, from whence they too have learnt so much.

Of his childhood we know little, except that it was by no means a happy one, as perhaps was only natural. Sensitive children are rarely as light-hearted as others; and in Amiel's case the want of a loving home-life increased his trouble. In 1833, at the age of twelve, he, with his two sisters, was left an orphan, bereaved of both father and mother. Apparently the only time of life to which in after years he looked back with real pleasure was that spent by him as a student in the Universities of Berlin and of Heidelberg. There he devoted himself heart and soul to study, a pursuit filled for him with a peculiar sacredness. His desk was to him as an altar—he brought to it his whole strength, he dedicated himself to it. But even here we are again met by a drawn curtain, very seldom lifted. It is not permitted to us to look into his happiness. The most that we gather is from the first few pages of his journal before his soul was overshadowed, as it was in his later years, and again from one short paragraph in which he compares the youth of twenty with the matured man of middle life. "At twenty," he says, "I was all spiritual curiosity, elasticity, and ubiquity; at thirty-seven I have no will, no desire, no talents left; the firework of my youth is nothing now but a pinch of ashes."

To his German education he owed the chief part, we might almost say the whole, of his mode of thought—not the matter, for in that respect he was guiltless of plagiarism. The great merit of his thought is that it is original and spontaneous; and it is this which constitutes its deep philosophical value. He loved to dig deep into the inmost recesses of his soul, deep into the meaning of the world around him. With true German synthesis he endeavoured constantly, if somewhat vaguely, and often vainly, to harmonize his thoughts with the life of the world, to weld the whole into one great unity. Infinity had an irresistible charm for him. From his *Wan-*

derjahre then, he brought back a mind stored with the most varied information, filled with scientific theory, able to grapple with the most abstruse problems, formed to grasp his subject clearly and firmly. A glorious promise of success, a great future were before him, if he could but lay hold on them and make them his own.

But we turn from the record of a short joy to the page on page of discouragement and failure. Illness wore out his vigorous strength, and warped the mind which gave an earnest of such splendid possibilities. For seven years he struggled against it, but it left on him and his journal an indelible mark. It threw him back upon himself, and encouraged in him that principle of reticence to which he owed many of his struggles. He was, indeed, all through his later life, what is commonly termed "an unlucky man." Now, however, such a term would be inappropriate. When in 1848 he returned to Geneva after completing his studies, it seemed as though the sun of prosperity were about to shine brightly upon him. We cannot sufficiently lay stress on his position at that period, for Amiel's life is made up of "might have beens;" and when we pass on a little further we have a difficulty in recognising in the broken, bowed thinker, the brilliant, joyous youth at whose feet the world lay.

A year after his arrival in Geneva, he was appointed by his fellow-citizens to the Professorship of Æsthetics in the Academy. But this, which should have been a gain to him, speedily proved his destruction. The glory of Geneva was no longer what it had been in the earlier years of the century, when men like Rossi and Sismondi, with many another, guided public opinion in the town. Tolerance had disappeared: the Democratic party had come into office five years previously, and, as the dominant faction, tyrannized over the minority. These last, who represented the mass of intellectual and refined society, in return, cut themselves off entirely from the Democrats, refusing even to associate with them. The situation was not improved by the expulsion of the Academical professors from their respective chairs. Amiel, arriving in his native town after the first brush of the quarrel was past, and considering the matter to be rather of a moral and scientific than of political importance, gave general offence to that portion of his fellow-citizens whose goodwill he most desired, by accepting the offered professorship. It was considered that he had by this act identified himself with the Democratic party, with the result that he was ignored by those who were in the highest sense the best men of the town. He was therefore thrown upon the society of men with whom he had little in common. Snail-like, he had no option but to draw in his

horns and find refuge in solitude. His isolation was almost complete, and a terrible trial it was to one of his make. The effects of it are traceable on his character all his life through. He retained this professorship for a time, exchanging it later on for the chair of philosophy. This he occupied to the last, striving to prepare for his lectures, when his fatal illness had already laid strong hold upon him.

He endeavoured conscientiously to do his best, in order to make the courses interesting to the students. But he had not even the consolation of feeling that his lectures were a success from a literary point of view, still less that his hearers entered with him deep into the heart of his subject. Despite his care in their preparation, the old fault crept in. His thought was too subtle, his love for generalities too great, to commend the lectures to his auditors. Instead of entering into the point of æsthetics or philosophy which he desired to illustrate, and showing it to them as it was in itself, or as he saw it, he would work round it, presenting it on this side and on that, first in this light and then in another, until, according to M. Scherer, "he thought that enough had been said when he had simply catalogued that which *might* have been said."

These are the chief facts of his life, and from these we strive to form some estimate of his character which shall have at least the merit of consistency. At first sight it seems almost impossible. A very Proteus, he escapes us whenever we think to seize him, and reappears now in one light, now in another. This curious aptitude for change he fully recognises in himself. He is full of contradictions, of oppositions; and we have at last to give up the endeavour to judge him by any common rule, and take him as he shows himself—constant only in his love, in all other matters changeable, variable, now confident, now distrustful, now in the heights, then in the depths of despair. There are some passages which reveal to us his own estimation of himself, and three of which, taken together, give us the "martyr to the ideal" in his true character.

"You are losing," he says, addressing himself as he was wont to do, "the unity of life, of force, of action, the unity even of self. Your passion for completeness, your abuse of criticism, your distrust of first impulses, of first thoughts, of first words, explain the point to which you have attained. The unity and simplicity of being, the trust and spontaneousness of life are fast disappearing. That is why you can no more take action." And again: "Action is my cross." And "Through analysis I have annulled myself."

These three short sentences, in which he judges and condemns himself, are but the concentration of a lifetime. They fill us with pity, the tender pity with which we must always

regard a high, refined nature, conscious of possessing great possibilities, and yet conscious of having made of life nothing but a failure, because life was too hard and concrete a thing for him to grapple with.

Amiel, from the moment when he entered upon the serious duties of a man's career, felt his incapacity. Those who have the highest aims, we are told by one[1] who resembled Amiel very closely in some respects, are ever the most humble of men. The actual greatness of their end makes them realize their own littleness. As one thinking, finite being finds himself face to face with the Infinite, of which his spirit is but so minute an atom, he is overwhelmed by a sense of nothingness, of utter unworthiness. Amiel's attitude is constantly this. He is penetrated with the vastness of the Infinite, he is always endeavouring to seize himself in it, to spiritualize himself, that the Infinite may be more real to him. And this brings its natural results after it. He is unfitted by it for the common things of the world, the human side of life. To live this life, with any degree of success, or even of happiness, we require a vigorous concentration, a perfect individuality, a power of grasping intellectual and spiritual questions with firmness and clearness, a taking hold upon life and moulding it into those forms which we desire that it should take. It was just in these vigorous powers that Amiel was most wanting. The lack of these qualities destroyed his life; for life is only worth calling so which is attended by happiness, and by something at least of success. He had neither in any appreciable degree; and the fault lay simply in himself, or let us rather say in his character. Concentration was far removed from him. It is the *unity* of life which he confesses to having missed, the unity even of self. He would, as it were, get outside himself, look upon his actions, upon his *ego*, from the point of view of an indifferent spectator; while yet realizing all the time with agony, that it was the Self which he was turning over and over, criticizing, speculating upon. A paradox indeed, yet only one more baffling trait in this mind so difficult to understand. Again, his sense of the fitness of things, of the necessity for completeness in every relation of life, was constantly interfering between him and enjoyment, and marring, if not wholly annulling his usefulness. This was his ideal—the ideal which, like the ghost of a vanished joy, haunted him all through his days, in all his work, even in his holiest moments.

Completeness, perfection—words full of ideal meaning, of highest delight to him; words which proved the bane of his

[1] Frederick Denison Maurice.

life, forbidding him to grasp what was well within his reach, to stretch out his hand and take that which was his by right. For how much these two words, this one ideal, are responsible, we begin dimly to gather, as we turn the pages of his journal. The scattered thoughts which meet us on every side speak of a mind stored with scientific, religious, metaphysical knowledge. A mind versed in speculation, original in matter and mode of expression. How much good he might have done to the world and to mankind, what stores of thought might have been ours to-day, but for this inveterate, repressing influence of the ideal! He will write nothing, because so many thoughts crowd on his mind at once, that he feels powerless to express them. He fears that his work shall be incomplete, that he will be dissatisfied. He dreads the attempt to be an exponent of things so high, and so his heart fails him. If he cannot have and give the whole, rather give nothing. If his work is to be imperfect, let it never be called into being. It is useless for his friends to urge him on. It is nothing that there are men ready and willing to give his work to the world once it has seen the light. He cares for no one's judgment on the matter; he himself is the severest critic of himself; and except he is satisfied, the work will never be.

Everywhere the same haunting fear pursues him, the same impossibility of willing, even where he most desires to will, the same dread of disenchantment. It is not wonderful that to such a man marriage was a joy which could never be his. It was too great a venture. Yet he knows well what he is losing. He is fully conscious of how much the union of his heart with another would have been worth to him. Here again his choice is set too high. He demands perfection, where he can find but incompleteness at the best. That he knows only too well what he is losing, that he regrets it bitterly, he reveals on page after page.

I am still waiting (he writes) for the woman and the work, capable of taking hold upon my soul, and of becoming my aim.

Again he cries:

When all that surrounds man trembles, vacillates, and loses itself in the distant darkness of the unknown, ... when all reality is converted into doubt, what fixed point remains for man? The faithful heart of a woman. There one may rest one's head, to take fresh courage for life, to regain faith in Providence, and to die in peace if necessary, with a blessing on one's lips. . . . . Love is faith, and one faith begets another. . . . . It is perhaps through love that I shall receive again faith, religion, energy, and concentration. It seems to me at least that could I but find my one companion, my pair, the rest would be given over and above, as though to confound my incredulity, and to put my despair to the blush.

And yet once more, as he feels the best things of life slipping from his grasp:

How hard it is to grow old when one has failed in life, when one has no more either the crown of strength or the crown of fatherhood! How sad it is to feel the understanding grow weaker before our work is done, and to see our body decline, before we have lived again in those who should close our eyes, and do honour to our name! How does the tragic solemnity of our existence strike us, when we hear at our awaking one morning, the terrible words, Too late! The glass has been turned, the time is past. Thou hast not reaped, so much the worse! Thou hast dreamed, slept, forgotten—so much the worse! Each one must reward or punish himself. Of whom, or to whom wouldst thou complain? Alas!

This is the cry of despair of which echo after echo rolls along his life, now expressed, now hinted at, but never absent. To take action is so repugnant, that he sinks under the burden, and gives himself up to inactivity. Here even the most intimate of his friends seem to have been at fault. Perhaps we can hardly blame them that, knowing him to be capable of far greater things, they were sometimes impatient of his inaction. That he suffered from it himself so deeply they could hardly be expected to guess. Such a refinement of sensitiveness is so rare that it is after all very excusable if it be not recognised at first sight.

How happy he might have been, we gather gradually as we go on, and observe his keen appreciation of beauty, the basis of every artist-soul, his love of nature, the delight afforded him by the changes of sky and scene, the deep thrills which the spring and autumn sent vibrating into his inmost heart. He sees a meaning in it all. The mists in the valley are a type of the veil drawn over the thoughts of maidens; the bright April morning is fresh as a heart but sixteen years old. The rain and the sunshine in autumn signify the return of joy to a heart that has lost its youth. The country after a shower is as a face wet with tears; less beautiful, but more expressive. The autumn has for him him two sides, which represent the difference between the sexes. He questions whether every season is not in some sort bisexual, since everything that is complete is duplicate. A young child playing, the birds going to rest, the goats on the mountain-side. Everything is capable of conveying to him some inner, mysterious meaning. Sympathy is strong within him—for his is a truly sympathetic nature. Listen to what he says of this side of his character. He had found a small yellow kitten, "very ugly and miserable," on his staircase. "I have nothing at all eatable in the house," he says, "but I give it what I can, a look, a caress, and it is enough for the time. Little animals, little children, any young life—they are all the same as regards a want

of protection and of gentleness. I am told that feeble beings feel so happy with me. It proceeds, no doubt, from a special influence, a kind of helpful strength which emanates from me, when I am in a sympathetic mood. I have a direct perception of this strength, but I am not proud of it. I do not appropriate it. I know it to be a gift only." Others saw it in him. "Madame —— says that I must be 'superlatively feminine, in my perceptions'—this sympathetic sensitiveness is the cause of it." Victor Hugo describes, in one phrase, just such a nature: "*Homme par la pensée, et femme par le cœur.*" Perhaps it is only the women among us who know how much that implies of suffering and sorrow.

Hitherto we have dealt chiefly with the subjective side of Amiel, with his conflicts, his failures, his moods. But we cannot trust to the journal to give us his character in its entirety. No one recognises this more strongly than he did himself. The journal conveys exactly that subjectivity which brought in its train irresolution and infirmity of purpose. It is untrustworthy because it is onesided. It is the confidant of his doubts and fears, but very seldom of his joys. If we knew only thus much, we should miss everything that was bright and happy in his life. That there were times when he could be light-hearted as a child, his friends combine to remind us. In their midst he would overflow with joyous wit; debate, discuss, charm all by his brilliant sallies. His "elasticity of spirit" was strong enough to rebound from his darkest hours, and in the society of those whom he loved, few would have recognised the thinker of the journal. M. Scherer records that he was the life of these gatherings—when he was there it was a joy to listen to him. The compensation which even in this world follows both on the evil and the good gives from the same hand the capacity for both the highest, most refined joy, and the deepest, most unutterable hours of sorrow. Amiel was worthy to appreciate both. His friends, seeing the one side of them—his outer life, with its capabilities and its possibilities, were right to spur him on to effort and work; they knew comparatively nothing of the inner life which held him back and thwarted him at every turn. He sums it up in the one sad sentence: "My friends see what I might have been; *I* see what I am."

It is necessary to dwell much upon this inner life, because in it we have the self, the real man, untouched by the circumstances of position or outward things. These seem purely accidents, those are the revelation of himself. His life lies far more in his journal than in the struggle for existence which fills the thoughts of most men.

The old admonition, "*Nosce teipsum,*" found in him a too

willing pupil. The only wonder is that in this refinement of self-torture he was still able to keep a hold upon himself. Coleridge, with the same brilliant parts and something of the same temperament, found a refuge for his pains in opium. Possibly, had he once fallen, it might have been an awakening, it might have been the turning-point, the shock giving back to him that power over himself which he had lost. That power may lie dormant for years, and yet awake again at the God-sent call of necessity. Coleridge, after years of slavery to his vices, gathered courage to throw off the yoke, and yet he too came perilously near to Amiel in that analytic process of destruction. Of him it has been said with equal justice, "He analyzed and theorized on his feelings, till his power was dimmed." He, too, can scourge himself, as he writes, "Action is the great end of all; no intellect, however grand, is valuable if it draws us from action and leads us to think till the time of action is passed by, and we can do nothing." It was in Amiel's very purity and uprightness that his danger lay. It was on the other hand this very purity, with the love for simple child-like pleasures and the ardent sympathy, that procured for him his little circle of devoted friends. His influence was never far-reaching, though he could attach to himself men of the intellectual stamp of M. Renan and M. Scherer.

As to his productive faculty, it was the will and not the literary power that was wanting. He shrank from publication, from concentrating his energies upon the necessities of form, from pulling his forces together, and actually nerving himself to begin. Where he could allow his pen to glide along without beginning or ending, as he does in his journal, he is prolific. The journal itself consists of seventeen thousand folio pages of MS.[1] It was continued all through his last illness; to it he turned as the one faithful confidant of all his trouble. Three months before the end came, he had realised that life for him was over.

Heart disease, bronchitis, and asthma with their wearing pain seemed to tear the life from him by degrees. For a fortnight together sleep became impossible. On January 28th, 1881, he writes: "A terrible night! For three or four consecutive hours I have struggled against suffocation and met death face to face." Again, "I know days of anguish and nights of agony. Let us humbly bear our cross." The end of life was one long struggle of the vital powers against the

[1] Of his published works we have to rest content with a few volumes of poems, betraying his accustomed power of thought, but hard and stiff in form; and a few magazine articles.

approach of death. "What efforts to prevent my dying!" he complains; worn out by the cough and breathlessness, by constant pain and even more wearisome languor and weakness, he could still see the will of God behind it all. He died in April, 1881.

The great want of Amiel's life—the want which will explain much that has been said of him—much that is painful in his life, is that of a deep personal religion. Here again, we must tread with cautious steps; we must investigate and compare diligently, before we presume to judge. Here again, we read the history of struggle upon struggle, conflict upon conflict, much unhappiness, much heart-searching. Here, as everywhere, he is his own worst enemy. We sympathize deeply with those who are among the noblest and the best, and yet are a prey to the questionings of spirit, which must be agonizing if they are true. We approach such with reverence and humility. The wrestling of a man with his God may not be rudely criticized as a common thing; but neither can it be passed by without a word, where it is so important a factor in the development of a character. That Amiel suffered greatly from his want of belief, we know. That he set to work manfully to fight the trouble, and get face to face with it, we cannot be quite so sure. If he had done so, we believe that his life *might* have been more happy than it was. Because he did not do so, or seems not to have done so, he remained uncertain, unsettled, not knowing, and perhaps hardly caring to know. He sought, or wanted to seek, "an ideal religion"—a religion full of sacrifice, beautiful, noble, a religion embracing all knowledge, a religion that should take in all science and all thought—and he never found it. Why? Because he was willing to take every impression as it came, to be influenced by each word written or spoken, that at all coincided with his own idea of what religion might be or ought to be, because he never took to himself the truth that a religion must be *first* a religion of love, and *afterwards* a harmonizer of intellect with spirit.

It is difficult, even in the early days of the journal, to know "*où l'on en est.*" His thoughts of God and of union with Him, are worthy of the highest Christianity—"Live in the presence of God, in communion with Him; and let thine existence be guided by those universal powers, against which thou art powerless." So runs a passage on the first page. "Renounce thyself, accept the cup, with its honey or its dregs. What does it matter? Let God descend into thee, embalm thyself with Him first, make of thy soul a temple to the Holy Spirit; do good works; make others happy and good." Here is his idea of life. Again, he speaks of Jesus as "the Re-

deemer." Surely in those days the influence of one loving and sympathetic friend might have saved him from his later falling-away!

That he was for a time very strongly influenced by Hegel's philosophy there is no doubt. We trace him in many a thought. This influence seems to have waned towards the end of his life. There were other influences. Certainly in the earlier years his religion was warmer, more personal, more loving, than it became later. He could take great delight in a sermon, or a religious book, and derived great help from it. The Bible was a study which interested him. But these aids seem to have become less and less to him, as he lost the warmth of youth. He seems to become afraid of searching too deeply into the things of God; they are too profound for him. "Let us not look too fixedly at God's secrets; we should lose courage to live," he cries. Yet, though imperfectly, the love of God and the desire to do His will are always present with him, through whatever phases he might be passing. How often does he speak of God's presence, of His will! How pure and high are his thoughts of Him! But still, as we look through the records of his declining years, we feel that there is something wanting, something that would have brightened his life, lightened his burdens, and given him the happiness which he so craved. It was just that personal element which was lacking, the element which is supplied by a personal Saviour. There was a great change in him before the year of his death, a change which left him with more of the philosopher's belief and less of the Christian's than was conducive to happiness. He was lonely with the loneliness which those alone know in its full bitterness, who have drunk to the dregs the cup of suffering, the cup of self-abasement and self-loathing. To those among us, who in the deepest sorrow can never be lonely, through the power of the Presence which to us is so infinitely personal, infinitely tender and consoling, the spectacle of this fellow-man's loneliness is unspeakably sad, because for him there was and could be no relief. We see how much he had lost, as we compare the spirit of the first page in the journal with that of one which is among the last. Here is the first:

> If death leave thee time, it is good; if it carry thee off, it is better still; if it kill thee but partially, still better. Again, the career of success is closed that the career of heroism may be opened to thee, the career of resignation, of moral greatness.

Here, the last:

> I can no longer work; existence is difficult to me. Let us give ourselves for a few months to be spoilt by our friends, for this phase is good; but afterwards? It is better to give up one's place to one who is vivacious, active, productive. . . . . Do I still greatly desire to live? I

think not. Health is what I wish for, and not suffering. Since this desire is vain, the rest is tasteless to me. Satiety, lassitude, renouncement, abdication. "Let us tame our hearts with patience."

"I have no creed"—here is his confession. Let us tenderly draw a veil over the sadness which those words cover.

It is not possible to give any adequate idea of the contents of the journal. It must be read carefully and thoughtfully before it can be properly appreciated. A few of the shorter thoughts may appropriately be given here, to serve as an indication of what lies beyond. Their force and beauty need no recommendation:

"Nothing resembles pride so nearly as discouragement."

"*Be* that which you would have others become."

"Kindness is the principle of tact, and respect for others is the first condition of life in society."

"Take care of thy reputation, not through vanity, but in order that thy work may not suffer, and from love of truth."

"Look twice if thou wouldst see truth, look but once to see beauty."

"Each man understands that only of which he finds the counterpart in himself."

"The end of life is to be divine."

"There are two degrees of pride: the one when one approves one's self; the other when one cannot take one's self as one is. This is probably the most refined form."

"He who refuses to accept regret, refuses to accept life."

"Time is but the space between our memories."

"In Paradise, everyone will be beautified."

"What we owe to others is not our hunger and our thirst, but our bread and our water."

"The knowledge of how to grow old, is the *chef-d'œuvre* of wisdom, and one of the most difficult sides of the great art of living."

"Decisive events take place not in action, but in thought."

Such are a few examples of the form in which Amiel's thoughts clothed themselves, an earnest of what might have been.

We are tempted to compare his life with that of Frederick Denison Maurice, a man of like fashion with himself, so far as deep humility, distrust of self, originality of thought, and true devotion are concerned. The one fought the battle of life bravely, and conquered; the other struggled painfully, and failed. Maurice conquered because, high as was his aim, he was content to use the means at his command, however inadequate they might be, to strive and influence the few at least, if he could not reach the many; because, though his ideal was not less grand than that of Amiel, he knew

that to reach it he must look away from himself, that he was but an instrument to do the work, in the hand of a Master with Whom all things are possible. Amiel failed because "rather than be less" he "cared not to be at all." He could not bring himself to step towards his ideal of completeness—up the toilsome round after round of the ladder—he must reach the summit at a bound, or stay below altogether. The ceaseless introspection of his nature would not allow of struggles which led onward and upward; they left him ever at the place where they found him, discouraged from further effort. The actual intensity of his inner life took away his capacity for work, and the want of ambition in his character explains how it was that he received no stimulus from within. His love of duty and of God kept him pure, true, and sympathetic, but to us he must, alas! stand rather as a warning than as an example; to us who would gladly have looked to him for help along the difficult path of life, which he might so well have been able to give.

Some men must be the martyrs of thought that others may profit by their experience. But, despite its many scattered gems of thought, such a work as this is rather interesting, and sadly helpful to us as a record and illumination of the man himself, and of men of his fashion, than positively useful. In reading page upon page of weakness and of longing after the unattainable, we realize more and more that the restless turning over in our minds of our own insufficiency and wretchedness will never carry us forward towards our attainment of a high ideal. It is vigorous, honest action which ennobles a man, gives him influence over his fellows, and makes him a bulwark of strength for them to lean on. Because this was precisely what was lacking throughout Amiel's career—if career we may call it; therefore we are constrained with deep regret to write against his whole life the sad and terrible word—Failure!

ALBINIA BRODRICK.

ART. IV.—PROVERBS IV. 18.

"*The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*"

THESE words are commonly thought to refer to the growing beauty of a good man's life. Casting about for some similitude in the rich storehouse of Nature, with which to compare it, the inspired writer bethinks him of the ever-brightening course of the sun, as he travels from his rising