

what he believes to be the fundamental principles—or maybe he would prefer to say, the fundamental feelings—of democracy and religion. I say feelings with some confidence, because Mr. Chesterton is extremely frank in scorning the notion that human life—in its history, its morals, its philosophy, its mystery—can be dealt with as a science.

Two other of his books have been reviewed in *The Public*,—"Browning" (vol. vi., p. 319), and "Varied Types" (vol. vii., p. 14). The present volume of essays is the best. It is the fullest expression that he has yet given of his creed, and of his views of modern life and thought, as tested by the uncompromising articles of this creed.

J. H. DILLARD.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE.

An Eye for an Eye. By Clarence S. Darrow, author of "Farmington," "Resist Not Evil," etc. New York: Fox, Duffield & Company. Price, \$1.00. Sold by the Public Publishing Co., Chicago.

Two hundred pages of monologue, almost unrelieved by other than reminiscent action, and darkened by an infusion of fatalism, a monologue which insinuates withal a moral at nearly every turn of the narrative, would not strike one as an interesting specimen of the story-teller's art. But Clarence S. Darrow offers just such a specimen in his "Eye for an Eye," and we venture the guess that few who read the first dozen pages of this story will close the book until they have read it through.

The story is told between the twilight of an evening and the twilight of the next morning, in the condemned cell of the Chicago jail in Dearborn street. It is the story of a wife-murderer who is to die with the dawn. His scaffold is going up while he talks, and the dread sounds of the bulldozers' work penetrate his cell and occasionally distract his thought. To buoy him up, the guards encourage him to hope for a hopeless reprieve, and deaden his sensibilities with whisky. He tells his story to a former workingman associate who had shrank from visiting the convict because he had expected to find him turned assassin, but was surprised and relieved upon going to the jail to see in him his old comrade unchanged, a man like himself. He had fallen a victim to an accumulation of human weaknesses and a train of circumstances culminating in his killing his wife, and had raised his offense from a lower grade of homicide to the highest grade, not by homicidal malice but by his efforts in a panic of fear to conceal his lesser crime.

In his story the convict narrates the circumstances of his life, dealing candidly with his weaknesses, of

which avenging society had made so much, but telling also, and without immodesty, virtuous actions prompted by love for his wife, his child, and his fellow man, but of which avenging society had refused to hear.

As the morning breaks, the convict, hopeless yet still hoping, closes his story: "Well, now I guess I've told you all about how everything happened and you understand how it was. I s'pose you think I'm bad, and I don't want to excuse myself too much, or make out I'm any saint. I know I never was, but you see how a feller gets into these things when he ain't much different from everybody else. I know I don't like crime, and I don't believe the others does. I just got into a sort of a mill and here I am right close up to that noose. . . Now, I haven't told you a single lie—and you can see how it all was, and that I wa'n't so awful bad, and that I'm sorry, and would be willin' to die if it would bring her back."

Then a new guard comes up, followed by two waiters bringing "great trays filled with steaming food" for this man whose long life of hard work had barely kept him above the starvation line; and as his friend leaves the cell, the doomed and half-stupefied convict calls out: "Hank! Hank! S'pose—you—stop at the—telegraph—office—the Western Union—and the—Postal—all of 'em—mebbe—might—be somethin'—"

The possibility of reprieve was uppermost to the last. It never came, but the dreadful climax is left to the imagination.

Although this story is intensely painful, there is no obtrusion of horror for horror's sake. It is a true story of some of the social horrors of our time, which do not spring from the nature of things, but are caused by man's inhumanity to man. There is little or no preaching, hardly any except that of the convict, and he doesn't really preach but only wonders how the distressful things that puzzle him can be. As with one of Dickens's characters so with him, "it's a' a muddle a' a muddle." But there is no need for preaching in this book; the story does its own preaching.

ETHICS OF LITERATURE.

The Ethics of Literature. By John A. Kersey. New York: Twentieth Century Press. Price, \$1.50. John A. Kersey is so cocksure a thinker and writer, that his reviews of world-famous poets and philosophers hardly admit of criticism, however humbly advanced. He knows what he knows.

Strange to say, this kind of writing is not so offensive as one might imagine. For what of it if, after all, the author may be mistaken; does he not never-

theless leave no doubt of the honesty of his convictions? If he hammers Bishop Butler and his spiritual-physical analogy to a pulp, we know he believes that they deserve it; and if he calls Tennyson's *In Memoriam* and *Idylls of the King* inflictions, we are sure that that is what they are to him. It is not easy to avoid a suspicion, however, that our strenuous author has no other standards for the poetic than what he would call common sense, even as he has no other tests for the spiritual than those of the chemical laboratory.

His idea that human motive exists with reference only to rewards and punishments, strikes us as a virtual denial of the human. If there is anything of which every man may say with reference to himself, "This is I," it is not his constantly changing physical body, nor even his constantly crystallizing habits, but his motives—his power of choosing between right courses and wrong ones. Yet the author denies to man "the power to choose between right and wrong."

With it all, however, he has made a very readable review, from a utilitarian standpoint, of some of the great literary luminaries—minds of which he says that they "have given the world some of the most superb thought, grouping the rarest gems in clusters with the veriest peter-funk." Among the productions reviewed are Butler's *Analogy*, Drummond's *Natural Law*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Pope's *Essay on Man*, Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, Tennyson's *Idylls*, *Faust*, and *Kidd's Evolution*; and in his reviews the author takes no opinion at second hand.

PHANTASTIES.

Phantastes: A Faerie Romance for Men and Women. By George MacDonald. A new edition with 33 new illustrations by Arthur Hughes; edited by Greville MacDonald. Published by Arthur C. Fifield, 4 Fleet street, London, E. C.

This new edition of *Phantastes*, which first saw the light half a century ago, is issued by the author's son partly as a tribute to the father "by way of personal gratitude for this, his first prose work." *Phantastes* is a delightful fairy story without a touch, apparently, of any moral lesson; yet at the end the reader suddenly realizes that it has been expounding to him a moral lesson all the way through. And what a splendid lesson! It is a lesson which he who flees from the shadow of self must live and learn in the forms that belong to the world of men; but in this allegory one finds those forms translated into the weird experiences of fairy land.

DEPRAVED FINANCE.

Depraved Finance. By Robert Fleming. New York: The Robert Fleming Publishing Co. Fleming's "Depraved Finance," like