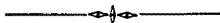


central "place," where was the "house of the LORD," in all other cases.

We may now briefly see how the confusion engendered by the ambiguous word "sanctuary" runs through the Oxford Hexateuch. First (i. 50) the law of Exodus is quoted, but on the next page we are told that "D lays down a very different principle. The Deuteronomic code opens in xii. with the demand that all local sanctuaries shall be abolished." We have here a tacit identification of altars with heathen high places. Four pages later (p. 55) an altar of earth or stone, called a "sanctuary," suddenly develops a door, which is "the centre of the administration of justice," and a doorpost, to which is affixed the ear of the slave who desires to remain with his master six years after he has been purchased. Finally, in a note on page 241, the "house of the Lord" is identified with the "local sanctuary." No wonder that in a note on page 247 we are told that "the laws as to the site of the sanctuary present perhaps the clearest instance of the modifications introduced by time in the legislation. The stages are clearly marked from (JE) the earlier sanction of the primitive plurality of sacred places to (D) the urgent demand for centralization of worship, succeeded by (P) the quiet assumption of a single lawful sanctuary."

There is probably no parallel in literature to the reconstruction of a nation's history by the higher critics on the basis of the mental confusion induced by a single ambiguous word of their own choosing. It stands out as an awful warning to all who would attempt to do the work of lawyers, historians, and other specialists with no better equipment than an extensive but unintelligent acquaintance with the roots of dead languages.

HAROLD M. WIENER.



ARTHUR STRONG: CRITIC, LIBRARIAN, PROFESSOR.¹

THE publication of Mr. Strong's literary remains marks an event in the world of letters. By his death England has lost and Europe mourns a foremost son in the ranks of universal learning. Orientalist, classic, modern linguist, art-critic, scientist, musician, mathematician, entomologist, and antiquary, Mr. Strong strove to attain the ideal

¹ "Critical Studies and Fragments." By the late S. Arthur Strong, Librarian to the House of Lords, Professor of Arabic and Lecturer in Assyriology at University College, London. With a Memoir by Lord Balcarras, M.P. London: Duckworth. 16s. net.

which in the eighteenth century Gray had set before England and Goethe before Germany—namely, that of accomplishing in himself the round of all those sciences of which other men are content to be single exponents. But in the attempt, like the celebrated John Leyden before him, Mr. Strong was cut off at an early age, a victim at once to disease and to intemperate erudition. And this charming volume, which pays the most fitting tribute to his memory by bringing together the scattered contributions of a lifetime, serves only to quicken in us the sense of his loss.

The story of Mr. Strong's intellectual career may be briefly told. It reads like a dream. After three years spent at Oxford, whither he had migrated from St. John's College at Cambridge to work in the Indian Institute under Professors Sayce, Max Müller, and Sir Monier Williams, he went abroad to become the pupil of Schrader at Berlin, and at Paris the guest and lifelong friend of Renan. It was here that he completed laying the foundations of an Oriental learning that embraced the languages and the literatures of no less than eight divisions of the human speech—viz., the three Semitic tongues of Hebrew, Assyrian, and Arabic, with their distant kinsman Egyptian, besides Sanskrit, Pali, Persian, and Chinese. The scholars on the Continent were astonished at the range and exactness of his attainments, and congratulated him, with all the polite extravagance of native compliment, on having acquired "an equal knowledge of the primary sources of science, and of the huge bibliography pertaining to its various provinces." It is well known that Mr. Strong ended his days as Professor of Arabic in the University of London. It may not be so well known that he kept himself so well abreast of modern research that he became our leading Assyriologist; and death overtook him engaged in editing for the Royal Asiatic Society the Arabic History of Jakmak, one of the Sultans of Egypt.

But Mr. Strong's studies were by no means confined to the Eastern hemisphere of learning. Aiming, like the youthful Erasmus, at compassing the whole round of knowledge, his eager mind embraced the Western hemisphere also. To a working acquaintance with the two great classic tongues of Greece and Rome he joined the study of the polite languages of modern Europe. Yet all this was, so to speak, but the pillars of Wisdom's house which she had builded. By still fairer acquisitions of knowledge were the chambers to be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. Not content with sinking the foundations, Mr. Strong found time for several *πάρεργα* ("hobbies") with which to garnish the superstructure.

He was by nature an artist; by study he became an art-critic, so acute in the detection of original authorship that by his means Hans Holbein had to part with a famous picture ("The Wheel of Fortune") which he owed to Hans Schaeufelin, and Lotto recovered his characteristic and long-lost "St. Anthony." At the age of eleven his note-book traces the hand of the budding Michelangelo—for so Strong ever spelled the name—pursuing in every imaginable shape and posture his studies in the skeleton.

He was no less proficient in the theory of music, and familiar with the evolution of musical instruments. Indeed, after the playing of the first few chords he is said to have instinctively recognised the hand of the composer.

He was also something of a naturalist; and to the science of botany and entomology added such a good knowledge of the local antiquities of many parts of this country that Lord Balcarres assures us there was no better guide than Mr. Strong to be found, whether in exploring the New Forest or in traversing the Norfolk Broads.

The essays before us embrace a strange and bewildering medley of subjects. First we have art in all its forms—the art of modern Europe, early and late; the art of Buddha and of Pliny; art in theory and art in practice. Then there are the Tell-el-Amarna tablets and the early civilizations of Egypt and of the Celts. Martineau's attack upon the authority of the Acts and the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel confronts Max Müller's assault upon the Evolution theory. Gladstone's "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture" jostles in strange neighbourhood a sympathetic review of Renan's "Histoire du Peuple d'Israel"; while the music of Mozart accompanies Darmesteter's "Songs of the Afghans" and Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton's latest poetry.

But the list is not yet complete. There are papers devoted to the noble memories of Erasmus and of Westminster Abbey; to a discussion of the privilege of peers, and of the Duke of Devonshire's relations with Dickens, Thackeray, and Leigh Hunt. Not the least interesting is that which traces the romantic story of Lady Sarah Lennox. Hardly inferior interest attaches to an original discovery of Mr. Strong's—a manuscript letter of Warren Hastings to his Indian secretary, Thompson, giving the great Governor-General's own impressions of the famous trial at Whitehall. These lighter papers complete our astonishment by showing Mr. Strong in the new light of antiquary and biographer. They reveal also his possession of an elegant literary style set off by a neat and effective wit.

The Catalogue Rolls compiled for the House of Lords and Chatsworth House present, perhaps, the most abiding

memorials of his fame. They afford proof of a still more curious learning, fertile in all the mysteries of ancient law and modern politics, as well as of the minute and abstruser details of ecclesiastical jurisprudence and theological debate.

Finally, lest a single province in the world of science might be left unspanned, Mr. Strong was seriously meditating in the last week of his life a history of the mathematics.

"The theme," remarks his memorialist, "was suited to his talents, and nobody could have dealt with so technical a subject in a more broad and comprehensive fashion."

It is a little difficult to survey without rising envy this record of apparently universal learning and flawless success. We feel at once inclined to ask, Is it possible to reduce within just limits the proportions of this seeming omniscience? Can we gauge the essential unity underlying this vast variety?

Δύσφρων γὰρ ἴδς καρδίᾳ προσήμενος
ἄχθος διπλοῖει τῷ πεπαμένῳ νόσῳ.

We will lay to heart the warning of the wise old poet-theologian of Greece while we attempt the solution of these two questions.

1. Mr. Strong undoubtedly possessed the twin gifts of fine genius: swift and sure insight, based upon extensive and accurate knowledge—St. Paul's combination of *αἴσθησις* and *ἐπίγνωσις* (Phil. i. 10). Given a sound general training, such as most men carry with them to the University, and those habits of precise technical scholarship, such as all men carry away with them from Cambridge, and join to these that boundless leisure in after-life which enables a man to become familiar with the contents of public libraries and private collections—given these conditions, a mind of this fine, rather than great, order will readily absorb all the details of those subjects which form the staple of modern thinking, and are scattered up and down the countless journals devoted to every science and pursuit under heaven. Armed with text-books, and supported by books of ready reference on every hand, the student, working—as Gibbon, Macaulay, and Gladstone worked—at the respectable rate of fourteen hours a day, may acquire, without possessing a tithe of their ability, an immense general knowledge. If too much indulged, this sponge-like thirst for universal information becomes a craving. It assumes, before long, all the forms of disease. The brain becomes (so to speak) consumptive, and absorbs with almost feverish activity the multitudinous objects of its unlimited curiosity. And with what result? The victim becomes a gigantic index, a cyclopædia on two legs, or, at best, a colossal glossary. The memory, stimulated to its utmost powers, waxes greater

than the faculty of invention, which in turn becomes the organ rather of wit than reflection. The man no longer reads, like Milton, "reading only to grow." He reads—that is to say, he devours folios of printed matter—in the mad hope of attaining universal knowledge for its own sake. But knowledge is not so to be attained—*Est quædam etiam nesciendi ars et scientia*. Knowledge is of worth only in so far as it goes to make one wise. It has a moral value of its own, and not a purely scientific one ending in itself. Else what genius could compete against leisure and a good memory? Neglecting this sound rule, we may become great surface scholars and prodigies of intellectual valour; but this is surely a field of glory that may safely be abandoned to some one of the higher orders of chimpanzee. Knowledge implies at least a certain fruitfulness in the propagation of ideas, and not merely the industrious reflection of other men's facts and opinions. We have seen in some places of popular resort a candle set in a mirror, whose single light is a thousand times refracted by the myriad facets of a revolving prism. This contrivance reminds us at once of certain types of literary genius, which Johnson characteristically summed up in his definition of Voltaire: *Vir est acerrimi ingenii sed paucarum litterarum* (He is an infinitely smart wit, but a poor scholar).

We are far from wishing to visit upon Mr. Strong the full force of this criticism. We intend it chiefly as a warning against what both Macaulay and Bishop Creighton foresaw would be a besetting danger of the present age. Yet the volume before us seems to go some distance in proving our general contention. We look in vain for traces of original learning, or for reflections and criticisms of any permanent value. We have before us the spoils of all ages, the thefts of all literatures. But these are not always stolen with accuracy. "It has been said," remarks Mr. Strong at p. 42, "that Pope borrowed from the ancients out of poverty, Addison out of modesty, and Milton out of pride." Poverty was certainly not Pope's failing. The phrase is Warburton's, and is cited by Johnson in his *Life of Pope*. What its author wrote was: "Dryden borrows for want of leisure, Pope for want of genius, Milton out of pride, and Addison out of modesty."

The best of Mr. Strong's reflections are those devoted to art, to languages, and to the manners of society. These require only nice observation and a happy memory. But when he moves out of the sphere of sense-perceptions into the realms of philosophy, science, and theology, he becomes confused in his notions, stumbles over fallacious analogies, or amuses himself with the barren task of transcribing whole

paragraphs of his author without comment and without discrimination.

Let our readers judge for themselves. They will doubtless take most interest in the subject of Mr. Strong's religion. He was a firm believer in evolution, which he views alternately as an original force and as merely a mode of working in Nature.

To the many objections launched against this confident theory from the days of Virchow in 1877 to Mr. Balfour in his recent republication of the "Foundations of Belief" Mr. Strong opposes a substantial "proof." A pike was placed in an aquarium, shut off from the smaller fry by an inserted glass panel. When the panel was silently withdrawn, the pike declined to devour its easy prey. Our author's explanation of this obvious miracle is certainly interesting (the italics are his own) :

"The training of the pike was not based on judgment. It consisted only in the establishment of a certain direction of *will* in consequence of certain uniformly recurring sensuous impressions. The view of the smaller fish provoked, no doubt, the natural desire to swallow them, but evoked at the same time the *recollection* of pain suffered on their account. The same sensuous impression proceeding from the same fishes was always in his *soul* the beginning of the same series of *psychic acts*. He could not help repeating this series, like a machine, but like a *machine with a soul*, which has this advantage over mechanical machines, that it can adapt its work to unforeseen circumstances."

We can find a more rational and less rationalistic explanation. The pike, deceived by the glass pane through which it could see its prey, but by means of which it was mysteriously prevented from getting at it, did not, when the pane was removed, at once realize its possibilities. How long the pike was in this state of illusion, and whether it was kept hungry by the experimenter, are two facts Mr. Strong forgets to state; yet they are the two strongest items necessary to his proof. We may be sure, however, that as soon as the deception wore off, this "machine with a soul" showed himself in deed and in truth a "pike with a will," without confirming or upsetting newly-discovered laws of cosmic autonomy.

But hereby hangs a corollary :

"A machine with a soul! A machine that can adapt its work to unforeseen circumstances! What is man," asks Mr. Strong, "but a machine with a soul?"

Solvuntur risu tabulæ.

The rest of Mr. Strong's creed is of a piece with this—is based on the same foundations. He holds with "that great

discovery of modern science, that of the *infinite* extent and duration of the universe" (p. 273). (We have read of this modern discovery before in the pages of Aristotle.) From this we get another corollary, that "within earth's narrow circle man is of no more final account than any other of the million organisms passing in endless succession between birth and death" (p. 165). (By death he appears to mean annihilation.) This somewhat dreary theology, worthy of the Cumæan Sibyl's

Desine fata deum flecti sperare precando

(notwithstanding a rhetorical reference to the value of prayer at p. 211), has this disadvantage on the side of our author, that he brings to this upper air a theology suited only to the souls of the under-world.

In place of Ewald and Baur or their numerous school we get Renan and Dr. Martineau as representatives of the Higher Criticism of the books of the Old and New Testament. Dr. Martineau's accuracy is hardly on a level with his powers of discovery. Thus we learn, in spite of thirty years' accumulating evidence to the contrary, that the author of the Acts confuses all history, and exaggerates the Church's earliest conditions of life, and, though he has been called a Pauline disciple, "betrays not the slightest insight into the system of thought which distinguished the Apostle of the Gentiles or sympathy with his special genius." Yet surely modern research has established the minute accuracy of St. Luke as a historian from the days of the discovery of the coin confirming the senatorial rule of the province of Cyprus (Acts xiii. 7, "proconsul") against the once general judgment of historians, down to the recent controversy in connection with the name Quirinius (Luke ii. 2). The other astounding assertion of this writer's ignorance of St. Paul's theology enables us to draw one only inference—to wit, that Mr. Strong's mutilated version of the Acts, like that of Dr. Martineau, did not contain the verses marked xiii. 38, 39 in *our* copies!

The following is Mr. Strong's attitude toward the Old Testament. It is a transcription from Renan, and is a proof, presumably, of his sense of historic impartiality.

"Jérémie peut compter entre les hommes qui ont eu le plus d'importance dans l'histoire. . . . C'est avant tout un homme pieux et d'une moralité sévère. C'est un fanatique (il faut le dire), haïeux contre ses adversaires, mettant tous ceux qui n'admettent pas d'emblée sa mission prophétique au nombre des scélérats, leur souhaitant la mort et la leur annonçant. *Voilà qu'il est loin de notre suprême vertu, la politesse!*"

2. We have now to ask ourselves, What is the clue that may serve to guide us out of this labyrinth of learning? In other

words, what is the ruling idea which controls this vast and various curiosity? This will prove at first sight difficult to discover, for nothing has come down to us but the débris of a universal erudition—literally, *Studies and Fragments*. Of these “fragments,” by far the largest is that devoted to art; and here we think it is that we shall strike a trail. It was in the direction of art, we believe, that the bent of Mr. Strong’s powers chiefly lay. It was the artistic in life, in letters, and perhaps in languages and science, that coloured his attitude towards most things. Of this we have several indications in the volume before us. The essays devoted to this one subject alone make up fully one half of the whole book. They review the subject on every possible side. They reveal an intimate knowledge not only of the theory, but also of the technique of art. And few passages will better prove Strong’s mastery of this subject than his brilliant defence of Reynolds’ canon about the due proportions required in massing certain colours with a view to producing “warm” and “cold” effects, a canon which Gainsborough tried to upset by painting “The Blue Boy” (p. 78).

We must close with a review of Mr. Strong’s gifts of literary criticism. The second half of this volume opens characteristically with a review of Froude’s “Life and Letters of Erasmus.” There is a subtle bond of connection between Froude, Erasmus, and Mr. Strong. They were all three supreme literary artists. Macaulay once wittily described himself as viewing art from the standpoint of a man of letters. With Froude, Erasmus, and Mr. Strong the reverse is equally true. They view letters from the standpoint of artists. Hence Strong was not less valiant in defence of Froude than Froude of Erasmus.

This invites the curious subject of Froude’s accuracy. Mr. W. S. Lilly, in his “Renaissance Types”—a book which is the very model of what such brief classic biographies ought to be—is too good a Catholic to allow such a Protestant as Froude the merits of an historian. *Patrium erat illi potare aquam* misrendered “his father was a water-drinker”; *non ex more* translated “he uses no forms (of prayer)”; Bucklersbury confounded with Chelsea; and, in a summary of Reuchlin’s life, no less than twelve errors of detail in as many lines of narrative! We think Froude can be defended at more points than Mr. Lilly may be in the mood to allow. Meanwhile, Mr. Strong has lighted on a truth which Mr. Lilly has missed; for he always indicated the honour of Froude with the retort: “Mais malgré tout il a vu juste!” (p. 12).

With Erasmus’ character Mr. Strong was in still completer accord. As if vying with his great model, this essay seems

to have engaged some of our author's happiest wit. Yet we think his wit rejoices over his judgment when he describes that great man as the "brain of the movement" that freed the human mind from the bondage of a thousand years:

"As an embodiment of reason . . . Erasmus enjoyed more prestige than power. For when the moment for action comes, it generally happens that passion snatches the control. So in this case: Erasmus might and did propose to Pope and Emperor. But it was the fanatic, after all, that disposed."

This is well and truly said, but is it all the truth? Surely the man who, in the universal convulsion of Europe, was content to take no side, who had no rule of conduct either in religion or politics but that of serving the present hour, who boasted of having laid the egg which he refused to allow Luther to hatch, who was all his life suspected by both parties of being alternately Roman and Lutheran, Zwinglian and Arian, and who, in what he knew to be a life-and-death struggle of Europe for her liberties, declined under shelter of the sacred name of liberty to throw a single page of serious divinity or philosophy into the struggle—surely such a man can hardly claim to be regarded as the *brain* of the movement which he so conspicuously adorned in the hour of triumph, and in the hour of trial not less conspicuously deserted!

To return to our author. Mr. Strong has revived (but only in order to quell) Scaliger's famous sneer at Erasmus' Latin. The subject is one of more than passing interest. Moreover, such are the obligations of literature to Erasmus (as the learned Mr. Charles Butler, the author of "*Horæ Biblicæ*," well remarks) that men of letters should eagerly rise in his defence whenever they think he is unjustly accused. We will for once join hands against Scaliger in defence of Erasmus.

We cannot better conclude both this reference and this review than in the words of our author:

"Where Scaliger led the way, Dryasdusts and Gigadibs have not been slow to follow. Any Don can now pelt Erasmus with his *telum imbellè*—Dead-Sea apples. Erasmus's works, nevertheless, remain, but as the fixed points which determine the form and compass of a luminous orbit. They help to explain what he did, but they borrow the light from what he was. *The man included the scholar, and the artist expressed both.* And herein lies the secret of the ever-fresh vitality of Erasmus."

Herein, too, lies the secret of Mr. Strong's peculiar genius, and of the pleasure his Muse imparts to the reader.

A. H. T. CLARKE.

