

agnation has much to be said for it, which is not answered by the too legally refined attack here made against it.

On the whole, it seems to the present reviewer that the fault of method in the present book is that it cuts hay with a penknife, whereas we want a broader machine. To this objection Mr. Donald McLennan may very likely answer that his reviewer does not understand legal argument. It may be so, for several arguments which seem conclusive to the writer have not that effect on the reviewer. For instance, J. F. McLennan's famous thesis that the Jewish and Hindu union with the brother's widow is a custom derived from an earlier polyandry, when she was the wife of both at once, is here given for the very purpose of showing what amount of proof is sufficient in such investigations. The present reviewer, though he has known the argument ever since it came out, and he talked it over with its author, never could see anything approaching proof in it, and still remains incapable. It is, however, desirable that proof in this subject should be such as the lay mind must acknowledge. It will be through many partial hypotheses, some upset by criticism and others standing their ground, that we may hope to have the whole theory of primitive society some day worked out. At present the part of it which converging research seems to establish is the doctrine of an early general prevalence of the system of kinship on the female side, which seems so strange to the modern European, with his long-inherited patriarchal tendencies.

E. B. TYLÖR.

*The Song Celestial*; or, Bhagavad-Gītā. (From the *Mahābhārata*). Translated from the Sanskrit Text by Edwin Arnold. (Trübner.)

It will be the fault of the English reader if his ignorance of the great Sanskrit epic is not considerably lessened by the efforts of translators who from time to time have done into English the principal episodes of the *Mahābhārata*. Mr. Arnold has been particularly assiduous in popularising Sanskrit poetry. His charming volume of *Indian Idylls* included the more poetical narratives of the labyrinthine epic, most of which were already familiar through versions by various hands. *The Song Celestial* may also be said to have been anticipated by the translation of Sir Charles Wilkins. Quite recently, from the Bharati press of Calcutta, was issued the first instalment of a version of the epic in English prose by Pratap Chandra Roy. This gentleman contemplates translating the whole work in monthly numbers—a task of such magnitude that its efficient rendering might well occupy a lifetime.

It is easier to sympathise with Mr. Arnold's diligent efforts than to anticipate any great popularity for his latest attempt. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* possesses none of the attractions of such episodes as the story of Savitri, of Nala and Damayanti, the journey of Arjuna, and the many accounts of tremendous conflicts that diversify much tedious dialogue. It is no more indispensable to the action of the poem than the numerous other moral discourses that have become incorporated in the poem during the flight of centuries. The praise of love, the deeds of heroes, and the

exaltation of war, are the characteristics of the epic in its primitive form. These are fully illustrated by the *Mahābhārata*, it is true; but, combined with much exerescence in the shape of philosophical reflection that could only have proceeded from later scribes. *The Song Celestial* is typical of these. Its form is quite opposed to the genius of the epic; it delays a mighty battle between two great armies, and chills the promise of vigorous animated action by a long abstract dialogue like a discourse of the Schoolmen. That Mr. Arnold should be attracted by this particular discourse is natural enough. It is a most interesting exposition of philosophy, conceived in a strain of transcendental thought, in which the comparative values of the life of action and the life of contemplation are ingeniously set forth with a suggestive delineation of the *via media*. In spite, however, of the sustained dignity of its language, the discourse is too purely didactic, too abstract in its nature, too involved in style, to be susceptible of metrical translation. This conclusion is strengthened by comparing Mr. Arnold's blank verse with the lyrical interludes of the poem. Blank verse is only too liable to become distorted prose when employed as the vehicle of translation from an antagonistic measure. The risk is increased when the subject is not pure poetry, but an ethical treatise. In *The Song Celestial* Mr. Arnold is seldom successful in reproducing the mellifluous verse of a former volume. *The Light of Asia* was easy reading on this ground alone, whereas there are many pages of *The Song Celestial* that accentuate its original sin of prolixity by language that is tame and prosaic and metre that is no alleviation. The lyrical passages of Mr. Arnold's version only increase the regret that he has not, in this particular poem, eschewed verse altogether. Here the sense of restriction, of "the fly in the glue-bottle," as Coleridge said of Schiller's blank verse, is sometimes almost painful. It agitates the reader with the impolite desire of the man who is fain to supply a stammering friend with the needful phrase. It must be hard for the English reader to conceive the Oriental quality of the original from which Mr. Arnold evolves the following lyric (p. 13):

"Nay, but as when one layeth  
His worn-out robes away,  
And taking new ones, sayeth,  
'These will I wear to-day!'  
So putteth by the spirit  
Lightly its garb of flesh,  
And passeth to inherit  
A residence afresh."

Again, in the varying accent of the following lines the ungainly jingle quite nullifies the solemn significance of the theme:

"Wonderful, wistful, to contemplate!  
Difficult, doubtful, to speak upon!  
Strange and great for tongue to relate,  
Mystical hearing for everyone!  
Nor wotteth man this what a marvel it is  
When seeing, and saying, and hearing are done!"

It is impossible to doubt that these lines would not gain by further translation into expressive rhythmical prose, or into what Mr. Arnold diffidently calls "our flexible blank verse."

Another disconcerting feature in Mr. Arnold's version is the large number of technical phrases retained side by side with

their English equivalents. Of this we have (p. 19) a curious instance:

"Make thine acts  
Thy piety, casting all self aside,  
Contemning gain and merit; equable  
In good or evil; equability  
Is Yōg, is piety!"

The attributes and titles of 'Brahma (p. 65) afford another striking instance. The effect of this, when not merely futile or grotesque, is to cumber the text needlessly. In many instances the original defies adequate translation within the metrical limits Mr. Arnold has prescribed. This, however, is only another argument in favour of prose translation. In other cases translation in the fullest sense is impossible, and Mr. Arnold wisely gives the original. When he attempts translation, and at the same time shows his perception of the weakness of his version by giving the original, he is much less discreet. It were far better frankly to translate, or frankly to acknowledge the untranslatable.

Having indicated the more obvious defects of an arduous undertaking, it is but fair to give a favourable sample of Mr. Arnold's work. In the second, fifth and sixth books of *The Song Celestial* are several passages of sustained eloquence and execution that will meet with ready admiration. From the second book the following precepts of Krishna addressed to Arjuna are selected:

"Yet the right act  
Is less, far less, than the right-seeking mind.  
Seek refuge in thy soul; have there thy heaven!  
Scorn them that follow virtue for her gifts!  
The mind of pure devotion—even here—  
Cast equally aside good deeds and bad,  
Passing above them. Unto pure devotion  
Devote thyself; with perfect meditation  
Comes perfect act, and the right-hearted rise—  
More certainly because they seek no gain—  
Forth from the bands of body step by step,  
To highest seats of bliss."

In the succeeding book, the passages in which Krishna reconciles the praises of contemplation and action (pp. 26-27) are fairly expressive of Mr. Arnold's harmonious versification. All through the poem the perfect life is indicated by the ideal existence that is intermediate between two active opposing forces. This is the *motif* of the divine song which Krishna recited to Arjuna midway between the forces of the Pāndavas and the Kauravas. There is a third and more excellent way in life even as there is in thought and deed, as is set forth in the triads of thought and action in the last book of *The Song Celestial*. J. ARTHUR BLAIRIE.

*The Field of Honor*; being [which it is not] a Complete and Comprehensive History of Duelling in all Countries, including the Judicial Duel of Europe, the Private Duel of the Civilised World, and specific Descriptions of all the noted Hostile Meetings in Europe and America. By Major Ben C. Truman, &c. Introduction, pp. 9-17, pp. 560 and Index of Names. (New York: Fords.)

It has become a favourite practice with the so-called Anglo-Saxon, and, *à plus forte raison*, with the Anglo-American—among whom education is more widely spread and in an even shallower stratum—to take up a subject of the highest importance, requiring years of study and extensive collateral knowledge,

and to vulgarise it in a half-a-crown popular volume, with a clap-trap title and a specious binding, which blocks the way to a better book. This is emphatically the case with Major Truman's *Field of Honor* (with the nice difference between Honor and Honour), inscribed to an *amicus humani generis*, when humanity is not the quality especially required.

Books on duelling abound, but one is still wanted as colophon for the following list: *Traité contre les Duels*, par Jean Savarget, 1610; *A Discourse on Duels*, by Thomas Comber, 1687, neglecting others of about the same date; *Essai sur le Duel*, par le Comte de Chateauevillard, Paris, 1836; *Le Duel, ses Lois, ses Règles, son Histoire*, par Henri Vallée, Paris; *History and Examination of Duels*, by the Rev. John Cockburn, D.D., 1720; *The Romance of Duelling* (a most valuable and enthusiastic work in two volumes), by Andrew Steinmetz, 1868; *Nouveau Code du Duel*, par le Comte du Verger de Saint Thomas; and *History of Duelling in all Countries*, from the French of M. Constance de Massi, of the French king's body-guard, with introduction and concluding chapter by Sir Lucius O'Trigger (London: Newmans). Following these comes a vast mass of learned matter, especially juridical, and still being supplied by Italy; for never has the *duello* been more popular among the neo-Latins than it now is, nor has the use of weapons ever been brought to such perfection. It is of this latest development that a history is required.

The *Field of Honor* opens badly. The first requisite was a sharp line of demarcation drawn between the *duello* and the combat singular, which is of all ages, and common to every race. The latter may be distributed into two kinds: the first is championage, when the warrior, like the Arab "Mubáriz," sallies forth to "renown it," and gains glory by slaying one adversary or more, or haply by gaining the Victoria Cross; the other is the monomachy for especial purpose, either retributive or judicial, to decide an important question without shedding the blood of the general. This, complicated with the Judicium Dei or ordeal-idea, the firm popular belief that in trial by battle the Deity could and would lend special aid to the just cause, was the father of the duel proper, the *Zweifecht* which the Scandinavo-Germanic races (Franks, Lombards, &c.) naturalised among the conquered Latins. The mother was what I have called the Religion of Honour, born of chivalry. It raised still higher the ethical system, borrowed by the noble Pharisees from the Stoic school. Its one commandment was *Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra*. It taught mankind to do right for right's sake, not to save their souls or take a ticket for paradise; and, furthermore, it inculcated with the highest truth that each man—and he only—is judge, jury and advocate of his own honour, a purely personal and individual consideration, which has nothing to learn from or to teach his fellow-men. This was diametrically opposed to the creeds and catechisms which ordered men to offer the other cheek, or simply to run away, as the good Moslem is told to do (without his so doing) when assailed by a brother Moslem, rather than engage in a *Wáki* 'al-isnayn or duomachy. And, as the best, corrupted, becomes

the worst, so arose the prodigious abuses which brought down upon the *duello* ecclesiastical excommunication and laical persecution and punishment, and which utterly failed to abolish what is based upon the noblest feeling of human nature. Again, we nowhere find in Major Truman the law pure and simple that the *duello* is a "satisfaction," fought for the purpose of purging honour; and that going to the ground for the settled purpose of taking the adversary's life is unjustifiable homicidal intention, little better than cold-blooded murder. The seconds who assist in a *rencontre* of this kind should be punished as severely as, if not more so than, the principals.

The book is difficult to review. Major Truman tells us (p. 82) that he has spent much of his leisure time during twenty years in collecting material, and he might have given a few months more of care to the result. Formally considered, the *Field* contains thirty-one chapters, of which nine are devoted to the "noted American" duels; and the author is justly severe upon that scandalous invention, the so-called American duel, a modified "hari-kari," of which Americans know nothing. The subject is badly distributed, the centuries jostle one another, and among "noted duellists" is the grand figure of the hero Cid, Don Rodrigo de Bivar. Here and there we have mere strings of names, "conflicts between kites and crows," for which the Index should have been ample lodging. "The skewer duel in the French Army" shows the true Mark Twain tone, which would consider the Old World and its venerable belongings from the vantage-point of the Western hemisphere. The sword is the weapon for affairs of honour. The pistol is only a *pis aller* when the curriculum has been neglected and gentlemen have not learned to use their weapons; and as for the shot-gun and the cow-boy revolver—faugh! The knife, however fairly used, has assassin-like proclivities (p. 20), although it is the bravest of weapons which most wants a man behind it. But it is a servile instrument which does not become *sangre azul* on state occasions like the *duello*.

Want of ordinance has led Major Truman to perpetual repetition, sometimes extending to the *tertius repetita*. We have the usual flower of prairie speech (p. 100):

"Ben Carter had 'heaps of fun,' as he expresses it, at Rock Creek. . . . Ben is a typical Western cowboy—a whole-souled, dare-devil puncher of steers. . . . Ben has one weak point, however, a fondness for the sulphuric acid annihilator which tyrannising bar-keepers retail as whiskey, and when he is 'full' he is ready for any harmless mischief."

This alternates with the normal rhetoric locally called "tall talk," e.g. (p. 393):

"As we write, a sky of spotless blue overhangs Lone Mountain, and away in the distance we can see the handsome shaft which perpetuates the memory of the chivalric being [Senator David C. Broderick] whose remains repose beneath; while grouped around the sacred inclosure are the annual pilgrims with their floral offerings [i.e., flowers], the perfume of which intermingles with the aroma of wild roses, shrubs, and plants, and an atmosphere seemingly freighted with the incomparable spices of far-off Cathay [here ousting India]."

The mistakes are innumerable, and the reader will learn with surprise and gratitude that

the guillotine was in full play during Richelieu's age (p. 453), that Col. Fawcett was killed by Lieut. Alexander Thompson (p. 198), and that Smythe O'Grady called himself Smith (p. 212). In his notes on the hostile meetings of the gentler sex Major Truman might have given interesting details concerning the serious study of the sword, now become "modish," in Austria, and especially at Vienna. And in the "Pleasantries of the Field" he should not have forgotten the witty consul for Trieste, Charles Lever, who, when asked to name his weapons, solemnly chose "swords at twelve paces."

RICHARD F. BURTON.

*The Iliad of Homer.* Done into English Verse by Arthur S. Way. (Sampson Low.)

MR. WAY, if he has not solved the standing riddle of translation, may at least be congratulated on one title to fame. His introductory page solves for us the vexed questions

ἄκρατοριῶν σκίψεως Ὀμηρικῆς

by describing him as "Author of the *Odyssey*, &c." Since the Great Unknown revealed himself as Sir Walter Scott, and took the responsibility of the "Waverley Novels" upon him, no such momentous mystery has been declared. In all seriousness, we trust that this ludicrous addition to the title-page of a meritorious work will be cancelled.

Mr. Way has attempted a less ambitious and more hopeful task than that which Mr. Smith Wright recently undertook. The hexameter, to say the least, has not taken its place among English metres with undisputed success. The metre of "Sigurd the Volsung" has done so. And if we follow a high authority in regarding the Homeric poems as Sagas, there is much to be said for putting them into that form in English which has so successfully presented other Sagas to modern readers. There is a combination of dignity with rapidity in this metre, when properly handled, that makes it, in those qualities at least, a really good representative of the Homeric hexameter.

Mr. Way appears to me to have handled his instrument somewhat roughly—whether from fearing a smooth monotony, or from possessing an imperfect and unwatchful ear for rhythm, I cannot say, but I incline to the former hypothesis—and to have somewhat marred "The rise and roll of that hexameter" by such lines, e.g. as the second of his opening couplet:

"The wrath of Achilles the Peleus-begotten, O Song-Queen, sing,  
Fell wrath that dealt the Achæans woes past numbering."

Here it is difficult, either with ear or finger, to count the line into rhythm at all. Less harsh perhaps, but surely not musical, is l. 572, bk. i., p. 24:

"To comfort his dear-loved mother, Hêrê of arms snow-fair,"

and l. 19, bk. ii., p. 27; l. 315, bk. i., p. 13:

"Asleep in his tent, and the balmy slumber around him was poured,"

"And unto Apollo a perfect hecintomb they slew."

Another defect of Mr. Way's is a predominant mannerism, peculiarly out of place in translating the lord of the "grand style"—a per-