fewer serious reasons for differing with him than were to be found in his *Theological* volume (see THE TABLET, March 25). Still Mr. Hutton's writings are always serious, or rather, as we have just said, earnest; and as earnestness gives depth to his Theological convictions, so it lends to his criticisms on Literary art a certain honesty and consistency from which mere criticism and mere art are too frequently widely divorced. It is a pleasure to feel that a man has convictions and believes he has solid footing under him. It may be that the solidity is sometimes ideal and that the convictions are one-sided; but one who believes that something may be known that is higher than mere "event" and deeper than mere phenomenon, has given pledges to fortune, and will be wary. He has some sort of a stake in the country, and though he may be liberal and easy with vagrants, he is far from being a reckless vagabond himself. No one who knows anything of the greatest literature of the day can help seeing that art is becoming more and more estranged from ethics. Poets and novelists analyze mind and paint nature with no farther object than the analysis or the picture. This may be partly the effect of the preaching of the "scientific" philosophers, that nobody knows anything except what their microscopes find out for him. It is, perhaps, what Mr. Hutton applies to a rather different subject, "Darwinism in art." We need go no further for an example than Mr. Morris. If any one asks him, as a man gifted with insight and expression, what teachings his thousands of lines are meant to convey for the world's benefit, he answers that he has no teaching—that he is but "the idle singer of an idle day"—and that his Greeks and his Scandinavians, with all their pangs and their joys, their loves and their hopes, are only another kingdom of that nature which he paints so well. The writer, great artist as he is, manifests no "conviction," as Aristotle would have said, and therefore his poems have no "moral." It is pleasing to see that Mr. Hutton, though his essays relate to writers somewhat older than Mr. Morris, is so strong against a tendency that bids fair to blight one of the most promising poetic springs that English literature has had since the publication of the *Excursion*. About the same time that this very poem saw the light, Goethe, a man as immoral in his life as he was un-moral in his art, was giving the world those powerful works to whose influence we may trace, in great part, the absence of morality in the poetry and fiction of our own time. In his Essay on *Goethe and his Influence*, Mr. Hutton says:—

So far from the truth is it that the poet must have no moral predilections at heart, that if he has none such his picture becomes feeble, watery, wavering. Impartiality in delineation, not impartiality in conception, is what is needed. Shakespeare frequently gives no foil to the character whose weakness he is delineating; but he always gives it some clear vision of the nobleness and the strength above it. Hamlet knows what he could do, and dare not. Lady Macbeth knows what she should do, and will not. Antony knows what he would do, and cannot. But Faust has no glimmering of salvation; Werther has no gleam of what he might be; Wilhelm is a milksop *pur et simple;* and Tasso's character is then, and then only, a fine picture if it be granted that he is supposed insane. It seems to me that no more remarkable break-down of the theory of the "moral indifference" of art can be suggested than by Goethe's writings. His poetry is perfect until it rises to the dramatic region, where moral actions are involved, and a moral faith therefore needed, and then it becomes blank, shadowy, feeble. *Wilhelm Meister* would not have been "a menagerie of tame animals," as Niebuhr called it with great truth, if Goethe had not lost the (never strong) moral predilections of his younger days, but had purified his eye and heart for their insight into human weakness by reverent study of nobler strength. (Vol. ii, p. 489.)

In the essay on *Shelley's Poetical Mysticism*—a brilliant and profoundly true study of one of the least understood of great poets—Mr. Hutton points out with excellent effect what he calls "the *hiatus* in his spiritual creed," which led him to "cry out" in exquisite numbers for something which he could not name, and which made him shrink with feminine sensitiveness from everything real and positive to dream about brilliant fancies and imbecile negations.

There is but one passage in all Shelley's exquisite poetry which rises into pure sublimity, because power is of the essence of sublimity, and Shelley had no true sense of power. But one does, and that is, characteristically enough, the passage in which he puts into Beatrice Cenci's heart the sudden doubt lest the spiritual world be without God after all:

> Sweet Heaven, forgive weak thoughts! If there should be
> No God, no Heaven, no Earth, in the void world,
> The wide, grey, lampless, deep, unpeopled world.

A sublimer line was scarcely ever written. It casts just a gleam on the infinite horror of an empty eternity, and then drops the veil again, leaving the infinitude of weakness and emptiness intensified into a sublimity. (Vol. ii., p. 188.)

The chief defect of Arthur Hugh Clough, a man perhaps a little over-rated by those who, like Mr. Hutton, seem to have known him personally, is stated to be his "chronic state of introspective criticism;" in other words, his doubt and scepticism, expressed in such lines as

> Would I could wish my wishes all to rest,
> And knew to wish the wish that were the best!

And the following criticism on "George Eliot" should be laid to heart by all who are disposed to imagine that greatness is to be achieved by doubting and mocking. Is it not what may be termed a strong supplemental proof of the existence of God, this lax, slipshod, boneless condition into which human thought decays whenever it approaches His sphere and yet presumes to do without Him?

To me, indeed, George Eliot's scepticism seems one of the greatest limitations on her genius. One rises from the study of her works profoundly impressed with their thoroughness, their depth, their rich colouring, their marvellous humour, their laborious conscientiousness, their noble ethical standard, *and* their weariness—the weariness of a great speculative intellect which can find no true spring of elasticity, and in vain forces from herself a certain amount of enthusiasm for optimist views of that "wide, grey, lampless, deep, unpeopled world," from which Shelley makes Beatrice Cenci recoil in horror. The only flaw I can see in George Eliot's intellect consists in her attempts to conform her mind cheerfully to facts against which she inwardly rebels. . . . . With a faith like that of her own "Dinah" (she) would, to my mind, be one of the greatest intellectual personages the world has ever seen. Her imagination woutd gain that vivacity and spring the absence of which is its only artistic defect; her noble ethical conceptions would win certainty and grandeur; her singularly just and impartial judgment would lose the tinge of gloom which now seems always to pervade it; and her poetic feelings would no longer be weighed down by the superincumbent mass of a body of sceptical thought with which they struggle for the mastery in vain. (Vol. ii, p. 366-7.)

It is true that the power which Faith gives can hardly be esteemed too highly, even in literature—such literature, at least, as is meant to live and to help men to the attainment of their last end. But it seems very clear to us that such writers as Clough and George Eliot—and we might add Thackeray, and, in a lower sphere, Mr. Trollope—would have a right to be somewhat particular as to what sort of a Faith their critics desired them to have. A one-sided Faith would cure one defect by creating another. If George Eliot had the Faith of "Dinah Morris" she would no longer be George Eliot. The Faith of the pale Wesleyan Saint would have broken down as utterly in the work of binding together the thousand fibres of a strong nature as the preaching of Wesleyan Missionaries has failed in converting the heathen. The Faith of a great genius must be a Faith not merely intense, but wide, reaching from end to end with that "sweetness" which signifies harmonious completeness. It must answer questions and close them, and give the soul a footing from which to spring. It must be grand enough to satisfy her ideals, yet practical enough to guide her steps. It must not only beckon her onwards, but help her to gird on her armour and anoint her with strength—not the mere strength of human striving, but a real and new strength, having its source outside. It must be firm enough to prevent her from straying, yet light enough to float her up and lure her to rise. And it must be so far embodied in a visible shape—in word, in institution, in life—that when she is at conflict within herself, and seems to doubt whether her ideas are not phantoms and her support a shadow, the homely and kindly reality of the stable sensible world may reassure her until the horror of the eclipse has passed away and the sun again is shining.

We are saying little about Mr. Hutton's literary criticism itself; and our extracts have not been by any means the best calculated to show the excellence of his writing as far as mere style and beauty of thought are concerned. The requisites of a good critical essay, we take it, are chiefly three: first, a clear and definite view of the author or work which forms the subject of the essay—clear in the working out and definite in distinction from others of the kind; secondly, the power of giving a collation of passages and thoughts of the author, wide enough to establish the view that is taken, yet managed so as not to load the pages with mere extracts; and thirdly, as in other matters, fresh and striking language to convey the thought. Some of Mr. Hutton's "views" are so complete and consistent that they are almost suspicious. One suspects that a "subject" has been somewhat manipulated if he seems capable of being so neatly analyzed. Yet when the essayist has shown us the grounds of his acute and clear estimate of Shelley or of Robert Browning, it is impossible to help owning that he is right. In citing his author he happily varies direct quotation with allusion and skilful analysis. And some of his language is extremely happy. Take this, said of Shelley:—"Other lyrical poets write of what they feel, but Shelley almost uniformly of what he *wants* to feel;" or this, "Even the *Cenci* is a passion not a drama,—the silver gleam of a winter torrent down a terrific precipice, leaving a shudder behind, and no more." We recommend our readers to read Mr. Hutton for themselves. Without always agreeing with him, and whilst fully alive to the fact that in many ways his criticism leaves out of sight important considerations that a Catholic would not fail to have urged—as, for example, in his essay on Browning—we have still to thank him for a sound and healthy book.

THE DESCENT OF MAN AND SELECTION IN RELATION TO SEX.

(2.) WHOSOEVER has applied himself to a lengthened study of Natural History with a view to a solution of the many problems which meet him at the outset, must needs confess, if only his enquiry has been conducted in the impartial spirit of a genuine seeker after truth, that in proportion as he has acquired greater knowledge of the subject, so much the more frequently has he been met by intricate complications, increasing the sphere of his labour, and placing him at a still greater distance from the longed-for horizon. But so poorly-rewarded an impartiality is esteemed by very few worshippers of science. Men are much more likely to strike out some theory of their own and then to study nature merely, though perhaps unconsciously, for the purpose of seeking out facts to support, whilst they ignore such as appear fatal to, their theory. Especially the science of the present day is, with some noble exceptions, too evidently

conducted on such a delusive system. The most important writings of scientific men have of late years but too often failed to exhibit that calm and judicial impartiality which was more common when science was in its infancy.

Neither can we class Mr. Darwin amongst the exceptions. On the contrary those who are well acquainted with his primary work on *The Origin of Species* will remember how much its tone, from beginning to end, was that of special pleading. His object in that volume being to establish the formation of new genera by means of the variations of species, he started with the gratuitous assumption that their variability was unlimited, and proceeded to make the most of his copious acquaintance with Natural History in suggesting means by which this assumed unlimited variability might be supposed to have been actually brought into play in order to furnish the different genera of animals which now inhabit this globe. But variations, like most other arrangements in Natural History, are met by a counterbalancing agency; in this case, the tendency to reversion; which peculiarity, strange to say, has been almost ignored by Mr. Darwin in the above-mentioned work. Yet amongst domestic animals and plants, where the greatest variability is to be found, the almost universal tendency to reversion is notorious, and it is no disparagement of the natural results of the tendency to attribute this reversion to inter-crossing. For the inter-crossing of varieties is rather the rule than the exception, as has been shown in the case of plants where the pollen of a more distant variety universally prevails over that of the same or of one more closely allied to it. On the other hand, variations are admitted to be of but rare occurrence, and here we find Mr. Darwin passing over the more ordinary processes of nature to insist upon others of an opposite character, which from their variety can never make way against those which he finds it convenient to ignore.

In the present work, whether Mr. Darwin has felt the weakness of his former position, or for reasons we shall presently suggest, he seeks to strengthen his ground by almost abandoning his former theory of natural selection, or the law of "the survival of the fittest" in the struggle for existence, in favour of a more restricted form of selection, called "Sexual," wherein the greater fitness is limited to the reproductive agencies. Here again he depends entirely on a gratuitous assumption, in no way justified by experience. Subject to the law of reversion, we are willing to admit the possibility of the superior development of pugnacious organs in males being in some way the result of transmission from those who have been victorious in their contests for possession of the female. But, as Mr. Darwin allows, the choice exercised by the female is the most important element in the matter, and we see no reason to admit his hypothesis, that the female will always select the most highly-developed of her suitors. Neither do we see why the females which are first ready to breed should have any advantage over those which come later on the scene. On the contrary, their offspring will be more exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and therefore less likely to live, so that we may have here another illustration of the old proverb, "More haste, less speed."

We cannot, however, follow Mr. Darwin at present into a full discussion of the more scientific portions of his work, having to deal with a subject of greater interest to our readers in his speculations as to the origin of mankind.

Now the main purpose of his two volumes being to show that man is descended from some lower form, it is very remarkable to notice how little positive argument he is able to adduce for his conclusion. In the first place we have a brief dissertation upon the close correspondence in general structure between the physical constitution of man and that of the higher animals. This is to pave the way for his principal argument, founded upon the discovery in the human body of organs which at present are useless, but yet closely resemble others to be found in the higher animals in constant activity. But the number of such organs is singularly limited; even the most striking case being that of the supposed remnants of the "*paniculus carnosus*," or the system of muscles which enables many animals, especially horses, to twitch their skin for the purpose of shaking off flies. It is very probable, as Mr. Darwin observes, that the muscular *fasciculi* in question, over which we have now no power, point to a previous phase of existence under different conditions. Yet in this case they will afford a striking corroboration of the Bible history, which tells us that Adam was created naked and intended so to live, for the power of twitching the skin would then have been almost a necessity for him, Mr. Darwin, however, troubles himself not at all to consider how far the Bible would throw light upon his difficulties, even by way of suggesting a possibly satisfactory hypothesis. Such a course cannot, we fear, be attributed to mere negligence, but points rather to the habitual contempt for the Word of God, which is now unfortunately too common amongst men of science. To those who have the faith there is no need to prove how calamitous it must be in the interests of truth for science thus to reject the light which is offered to her from above. Yet even as a matter of logic this method is much to be regretted, inasmuch as Mr. Darwin's arguments generally take the form of assuming that such and such a physical phenomenon can be accounted for in no other way than that which he suggests: a mode of argument which strictly imposes upon him the burden of showing how all other hypotheses already laid before the public are insufficient to explain the difficulty.

The other instances of rudimentary organs to which he refers are too fanciful to require serious consideration. One, on which he lays great stress, is the discovery of a little point on a fold of the ear which projects outwards, and is forthwith assumed to be "a vestige of formally pointed ears," supplying another link to connect man with the brute creation. A few others complete the sum of the positive evidence which he is able to adduce in support of his conclusion, this side of the argument being entirely disposed of in his first 33 pages. The remainder of the work is devoted to answering the objections commonly raised against his theory, by far the greater portion of it being occupied with the enumeration of his new doctrine of Sexual Selection, which is intended to supply the deficiencies of his former system, already so famous under the title of Natural Selection.

Two chapters, however, are devoted to the consideration of the greatest obstacles in his path, the difficulties arising from the superior intelligence of mankind, and especially the possession of a moral sense, of which no trace can be discovered in the brute creation.

But those who devote their energies entirely to the pursuit of the physical sciences are seldom able to cope successfully with the more abstract notions of metaphysics, and Mr. Darwin is certainly not more fortunate than is usual in this respect. In a very interesting chapter on "Mental Powers" he gives many instances of remarkable sagacity displayed by animals, for some of which he claims the dignity of reasoning. The most important and essential difference between the mental powers of man and of the beasts is here, however, utterly ignored. The souls of brutes being entirely dependent upon their bodies, it follows, as S. Thomas teaches, that they can have no ideas higher than those which can be acquired by means of the senses. Man, on the other hand, is endowed with the power of subjecting the ideas obtained from his senses to analysis, and, by abstraction, of arriving at the knowledge of the essence of the objects represented to him from without. This is a perfectly distinct faculty from anything to be found in the brutes, but of this he takes no account, thereby exhibiting an ignorance of metaphysics which shows most clearly his incompetency to deal with the question.

Neither does he display any greater capability for understanding questions relating to the soul in his theory of the development of the moral sense. In his idea it is a mere social instinct, refined and extended by means of a superior intelligence. But instinct and intelligence are simply incompatible one with the other, instinct being essentially a blind impulse. If, therefore, it has been brought under the operation of the intellect it must have changed its character entirely, and the difficulty of accounting for it remains as great as before. And again it is notorious that so far from our moral sense acting within us as a natural impulse, those who yield most readily to their natural impulses are precisely those who have the least command over their passions, and perform most frequently actions which they afterwards regret.

As a natural consequence of his view he is led of course to expect a constant progress in virtue of the human race:

> Looking to future generations, there is no cause to fear that the social instincts will grow weaker, and we may expect that virtuous habits will grow stronger, becoming perhaps fixed by inheritance. In this case the struggle between our higher and lower impulses will be less severe, and virtue will be triumphant (p. 104).

With this quotation we must take leave of Mr. Darwin, sincerely regretting that the statistics of crime committed in this country leave us no possibility of joining him in so pleasant a belief. It is, however, a perfectly legitimate consequence of his theory, and our readers can judge for themselves whether it does not suffice by itself to constitute a perfect *reductio ad absurdum* of his whole argument.

ZUR GESCHICHTE DES VATICANISCHEN CONCILES.

(3.) A BRIEF outline of Lord Acton's "Contribution" will serve to explain his present attitude in reference both to the Pope's Infallibility and to the Vatican Council. His account of the convocation and proceedings of the Council is much the same as that with which we have been familiar. It is drawn up for the most part from the writings and addresses of the so-called party of Opposition; and he rarely gives us any clue to his own views, except as far as he adopts their statements as his own. The result of his investigation appears to be embodied in the following extract: "The Bishops (of the minority) by their example have taught Catholics to ignore a Council which was not lawful in its constitution, free in its discussions, nor unanimous in its teaching. The Bishops, through this their own example and conduct, taught and led on the Catholics to refuse recognition to a Counell which in its structure had not been regular, in its dealings not free, and in its doctrine not unanimous." We shall examine briefly each of these charges in order, and first as to the illegality of the constitution of the Council.

It may be well to remark that no fixed rule can be laid down as to the nature of the representation which is sufficient, and no more, to render a Council Œcumenical on that score. We can point out extremes on either side; but the exact number never. Still our inability to do this leads to no practical inconvenience. In a given case, the Church comes to our aid and determines, either during the sitting of the Council or at its close, whether the actual representation was adequate or not. The Church has