

it. Perhaps it is better that the world shall miss the poignant spectacle of the sufferings of a keen mind and a good heart.

—The controversy excited some ten years ago by the publication of Prof. Bugge's studies on the origin of the Norse sagas shows no signs of abatement. Most of the older Germanists still reject the views of the Norwegian professor, and the venerable but fiery Dr. Sepp of Munich does not hesitate to denounce this attack on the genuineness and integrity of the Edda as "an outrage on the national religion," and a sacrilege sufficient to kindle the wrath of the manes of Jacob Grimm. The younger generation of Germanists discuss the difficult questions involved more calmly and dispassionately, and are inclined, for the most part, to accept Bugge's conclusions. At any rate, they have the immense advantage of perceiving that scientific problems cannot be solved, but are rather obscured, by vituperation. Among the latest and most important contributions to the subject are Dr. Mogk's 'Abriss der deutschen Mythologie,' a portion of which has already appeared in Paul's 'Grundriss der germanischen Philologie' (vol. i., pp. 982, sqq.), and E. H. Meyer's 'Völuspá' (Berlin: Meyer & Müller, 1889, pp. 298), and 'Die eddische Kosmogonie' (Freiburg i. B.: Mohr, 1891, pp. 118). Meyer maintains that the 'Völuspá' is of foreign origin, and paraphrases in the popular style of the sagas the theological notions current in the Middle Ages concerning the genesis of things, and that it was written by the Iclander Sæmund early in the twelfth century. Of course he does not affirm that these ideas concerning the creation of the world and its final destruction are originally and exclusively Christian: they are common to the traditions and speculations of all the nations of antiquity, and can be traced back to the Assyro-Babylonian cosmogony as their primitive source. All that he asserts is, that they came into Iceland as the result of the Christianization of that country through the school at Oddi, of which Sæmund was the head and through which Snorri Sturluson borrowed the cosmogonic and mythological conceptions embodied in the so-called Snorra Edda. Thus, for example, he regards the Norse trinity of Odhin, Vili, and Vé as an imitation of the Christian Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and thinks that this is evident from the etymology of the names and the mutual relations of the three persons.

MACHIAVELLI'S PRINCE.

Il Principe. By Niccolò Machiavelli. Edited by L. Arthur Burd, with an introduction by Lord Acton. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Macmillan, 1891. Pp. xl, 403.

It is with equal pleasure and surprise that we welcome this admirable edition of a great Italian classic from the hands of an Englishman hitherto unknown to us; for English scholars are still somewhat negligent of Continental masterpieces, often devoting their critical talents to the study of a third-rate Latin or Greek author rather than to a first-rate modern. But Mr. Burd's edition of 'The Prince' is not only remarkable as being the work of an Englishman, but as being the edition for which the world has been looking for three hundred and fifty years. He has at last made it possible for any reader to form an unprejudiced opinion of the meaning of Machiavelli's famous treatise. With all the patience, industry, and research of a German, he has collected his materials, and he has set them forth with a clearness and terseness to which

but few Germans attain. The service which he has thus rendered must be as permanent as is the interest of 'The Prince' itself, for he has at last moored to the solid rock of fact that work which has, during ten generations, been drifting to and fro on the conflicting tides of opinion. How important this achievement is hardly needs to be explained here, because every one who knows anything about Machiavelli knows that, as the ablest exponent of one of the great theories of political authority and ethics, he has not been and cannot be superseded. Machiavellianism is an element which human society has not eliminated, a force whose working can be as clearly traced to-day as in the days of the Borgias.

Regarded as an artistic creation, Machiavelli's Prince has had no peer in modern literature except Goethe's Mephistopheles; the former is the personification of the selfishness of a State, as the latter is of the selfishness of the individual who denies all obligations to God or man, and seeks only to gratify his passions, whatever may be the injury he inflicts on his fellows. But Machiavelli had no poet's creation in view when he drew his portrait of the Prince; his aim was intensely practical, and he trusted to observation, to facts, not to sentiment or imagination, for the substance of his work. Seeing Italy harassed by a multitude of petty tyrants, and constantly overrun by foreign invaders, he believed that her only hope lay in the expulsion of the "barbarians," and in the gradual consolidation of her distracted provinces under the sway of one ruler. But what sort of a man must such a ruler be? What are the means by which princes acquire and hold States? These are the questions Machiavelli asks himself, and to find answers to them he examines the actual methods and characteristics of the princes of his own and former ages. He discovers that not devotion to the common weal, but to self-interest, not justice but success, not right but might, are the great forces and considerations which determine the actions of monarchs. Therefore, a prince who would succeed must excel his rivals in the employment of craft or cruelty; morals no more concern him than they concern a general in battle; his one duty is to conquer, and, if he conquer, victory excuses all his crimes. Indeed, the Prince (or State) cannot truly be said to commit crimes, being a law unto himself. "I do not describe what ought to be, but what is," Machiavelli would retort to his critics. "You may prefer a world which you would call more moral, but this is the world in which we are placed, these are the tricks and forces which dominate it. It is as idle to complain that a monster like Alexander VI. occupies the chair of St. Peter, or that ruffians like the Sforza lord it over Lombardy, as that water runs down hill. The facts are as I have stated them: strength prevails over weakness though the strong man be wicked and the weak be virtuous; shrewdness and guile impose upon simplicity; it is not a question as to which is ideally worthier, but as to which succeeds."

The best proof of the accuracy of Machiavelli's portrait is the storm of abuse that it provoked. He had blabbed an open secret, and from both princes and peoples came an indignant denial. The former protested that they were not the villains, the latter that they were not the fools, he painted them. They branded him as a blasphemer of human nature, as a cynic and reprobate who imputed to mankind the basest motives. His enemies, not content with assailing his maxims, loaded his memory with evil insinuations that he was personally a depraved man—as if to imply that his horrid

opinions were the natural outcome of his life. Even his apologists dared not defend the literal interpretation of his treatise, but they insisted that it had a hidden meaning which justified it and exonerated its author. Cardinal Pole, one of the earliest and most virulent of Machiavelli's critics, states that when he attacked 'The Prince' before Machiavelli's fellow-citizens, they always replied,

"as they said M. himself did, . . . that in the book he had regard not only to his own feeling, but also to that of the man to whom he was writing. Now this man [Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici] he knew for a tyrant by nature, and so he put in things which could not fail to please such a nature exceedingly. Still he, like every other writer on the education of a king or prince, was of opinion, and experience verifies it, that these very things would, if carried out in practice, make the tyrant's reign a short one. Now this was exactly what he desired, for his heart was all afire with hatred of the Prince to whom he wrote, and he had no other object in the book except this—by writing to a tyrant things which a tyrant loves, to hurl him, if possible, headlong to self-destruction."

Another school of defenders maintained that Machiavelli did not so much aim at hastening the downfall of princes by instigating them, by his disingenuous counsel, to commit fatal blunders, as to put in the minds of the people a knowledge of the cunning by which they had been duped, in order that they might thenceforth be duped no more. This latter, which we may call the "antidote theory," since, according to its advocates, Machiavelli, in describing the effects of political poisons, suggested their remedy, has been, on the whole, the most popular of all the various apologies; and it is worth recording that the Italians, during their long struggle to oust the Austrian "barbarian" and to shake off their native despot during the present century, quoted, after Dante, none of their bygone great men more often than Machiavelli. But, on the other hand, the army of his enemies, large from the first, have kept up a persistent fire down to the present time, varying their points of attack and adopting different weapons, but holding fast to their detestation of "Old Nick." To abominate him and his doctrines has long been an easy way to win reputation for superior virtue; but might it not be cited as evidence of the skill with which Machiavelli dissected human nature? It is significant that the Company of Jesus, which has persistently followed the teachings of 'The Prince,' and that Frederick the Great, a Machiavellian monarch if ever there was one, have been among the loudest to denounce and deny their master. The attitude of the world towards Machiavelli reminds us of that of a camp meeting at which the revivalist preacher requests those of his hearers who hate the devil to stand up—and all rise.

But this is not the place in which to record and examine the great mass of prejudices and opinions which have, for three centuries and a half, prevented 'The Prince' from being dispassionately viewed; merely to indicate them will suffice for our present purpose, which is to express deep satisfaction that, with the publication of Mr. Burd's book, any excuse for misconceptions in the future is removed. He indulges in no empty or Pharisaical abuse, he does not hold up his hands in holy horror, nor believe that by declaring that he detests lying and killing he has "answered" Machiavelli. Wisely leaving the Ten Commandments to defend themselves, he aims simply at giving the reader every possible help to understand exactly what Machiavelli meant, and he does this by furnishing ample historical information about the period in which the Florentine

Secretary lived, and by elucidating 'The Prince' with quotations from Machiavelli's other works. Thus we are able to see how much of Machiavelli's doctrine was common to his time, and how much was peculiar to himself, and to estimate his work as a whole, instead of in fragments. Hitherto, it has been too much the habit of critics to pick out a few obnoxious sentences and to direct their whole attention to them; Mr. Burd makes it possible for any one to know which opinions Machiavelli elsewhere qualified, which he abandoned, and which he held to the end of his life.

Instead of writing a formal biographical and critical introduction, Mr. Burd limits himself to a brief statement of the purpose of 'The Prince,' of the conditions under which it was produced, and of the attitude of early critics towards it; then, in a copious Historical Abstract, he sets down year by year the principal events in Italian politics and in Machiavelli's personal fortunes, between 1469 and 1527. By this last plan the reader can turn quickly from any passage in 'The Prince,' in which contemporary affairs are alluded to, and find a succinct narrative of them; this is all the more important because Machiavelli draws from the current affairs of his day most of the illustrations for his doctrines. Mr. Burd's knowledge of the history of Medicean Italy will best be appreciated by those who have themselves studied the Renaissance most thoroughly. It is rare indeed to come upon so comprehensive a summary of any epoch as that on pp. 23-26, in which the condition of decaying Italy is described with great force and compactness; and many of the notes, as, for instance, the short prefaces to chaps. 3 and 18, and the note on Cæsar Borgia (pp. 214-217), are models of what the best editorial work should be.

The key to Mr. Burd's own attitude towards 'The Prince,' and, as we firmly believe, the true one, is contained in the following passage (p. 16):

"In modern times hardly any science of which the subject-matter is man, viewed under one aspect singled out from many others, has been brave enough to neglect the other points of view from which man may be regarded. Political Economy is the classical exception; and it is characteristic of modern feeling that there should be so much opposition to those who choose to regard men solely as creatures under the laws of supply and demand; and the belief that to disregard moral causes which influence even commercial action vitiates the conclusions of political economists, is in a measure justified. The same holds good of political science: any attempt to reckon without the sentiments and permanent moral convictions of men is doomed beforehand to failure. But there may be a moral interest in eliminating one side of human nature, the most capricious and the least subject to law, in order to trace the operations of cause and effect, assuming that no disturbing agencies will be present.

"Machiavelli, in 'The Prince,' has eliminated sentiment and morality, though the interest to him was not merely scientific, but practical also; he did so partly deliberately and partly without any distinct consciousness that he was mutilating human nature. But whatever considerations determined the method he employed, he followed it without swerving, consistently and logically. . . . Whether by thus considering only one aspect of human nature at a time he has vitiated his own conclusions, or whether this is rather the condition upon which alone he could solve the problem which he set himself, may be doubted; but it would be unfair in any case to argue from his silence and his omissions that he had lost the consciousness that man might be regarded as a moral being; he merely declined to allow moral considerations to interfere, as he believed they did, with the logical discussion of the subject in hand."

Readers who are acquainted with Lord Acton's great erudition and ability, and who

have cause to regret that he so seldom displays them in print, will turn at once to his Introduction, and will probably be disappointed by it, at least at first. For instead of its being a criticism by Lord Acton upon so remarkable a personage as Machiavelli, it is rather a collection, gathered from the most various and recondite sources, of the opinions which philosophers, politicians, and theologians have expressed on Machiavelli and Machiavellianism during the past three hundred years. Only the cement in which these mosaic-bits are embedded is Lord Acton's own, but from the design he has wrought, and from his brief comments, we can infer what his own views are. He would maintain that Machiavelli's account of the practice of rulers and states is in the main correct; that, whatever may be the talk about moral considerations, self-interest really determines international policy, and that the cases in which an unselfish motive has prevailed are few compared with the habitual employment of Machiavellian principles.

On the surface we are easy-going optimists, whatever may be our inmost genuine convictions, and either we strive not to see the evil forces by which we are hemmed in, or we call them by pleasant names. We assume that many of the enormities which shock us as we look back upon the past, perished with the past. But it is better to know the truth than to dream in a Fool's Paradise, for, until we have measured an abuse, we cannot successfully combat it. And Machiavelli's 'Prince' is one of the books which should be read and pondered by every man who would see some of the aims and methods that have characterized the dealings of states and rulers since the beginning of history. The form which Machiavellianism assumes may vary, but its essence remains fixed. Europe to-day is as much under the sway of selfish principles as Italy was at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The belief that might makes right, that there is no appeal from brute force, that the State can do no wrong, that success justifies all measures, and that weakness is the only failure, the only unpardonable sin—these are so easily deducible from the current practice of European nations that we need do no more than mention them; and these are true Machiavellian doctrines. We are shocked at the name, but not at the thing. Metternich, Louis Napoleon, Bismarck, Beaconsfield—be the result of their policy good or bad—were all practical disciples of the Florentine master of statecraft; and as evidence that under a republican form of government human nature does not change, we need only cite the success of such vulgar and clumsy Machiavellians as Butler, Blaine, and Quay. Their success is the best evidence that our public would be benefited by reading 'The Prince,' in which are set down, as in a scientific treatise, the signs by which the political charlatan can be detected and so guarded against. Of course, Machiavelli no more invented the traits which are called by his name than Goethe invented those traits in human nature which he personified in Mephistopheles; to have analyzed and described them as he has done assures for him and his book the permanent attention of students of politics and ethics. "Religion, progressive enlightenment, the perpetual vigilance of public opinion, have not," says Lord Acton, "reduced his empire, or disproved the justice of his conception of mankind. He obtains a new lease of authority from causes that are still prevailing, and from doctrines that are apparent in politics, philosophy, and science. Without sparing censure or employing for

comparison the grosser symptoms of the age, we find him near our common level, and perceive that he is not a vanishing type, but a constant and contemporary influence."

ROBINSON'S CAST CATALOGUE.

Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Catalogue of Casts. Part III. Greek and Roman Sculpture. By Edward Robinson, Curator of Classical Antiquities. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1891.

AMONG the many advantages which large collections of casts afford to the study of ancient art, one of the most conspicuous is the opportunity they offer for the compilation of scientific catalogues, embodying in chronological sequence the principal monuments of Oriental, Greek, and Greco-Roman sculpture. Such books or manuals are superior to systematic histories of art in one particular, namely: they deal almost exclusively with facts and leave very little room for theories. When antiquated, they require supplements, but do not need to be completely rewritten, as should be, for instance, Overbeck's 'Geschichte der Plastik,' the third edition of which (1881) is now so strikingly out of date. Archaeological literature already possesses several good catalogues of that kind by Friederichs, Hettner, Kekulé, Bümmner, Michaelis, and others; the first and the last, describing the large collections at Berlin and at Strassburg, are certainly the most useful and most widely known. Friederichs's great work, first issued in 1868, was re-edited in 1885 by Wolters; the main defect of this new edition is lack of condensation, due to a somewhat superstitious regard for the original. The catalogue we owe to Prof. Michaelis (1887) is much shorter, but superior to the Berlin one by reason of the judicious selection of monuments all of real importance to the antiquarian; while the Berlin collection, like that in the École des Beaux-Arts at Paris, contains many casts which chance alone has brought together.

It is, indeed, an advantage for such collections to have been formed at a recent date, under the direction of an experienced archaeologist; so in this particular the Boston Museum of Arts, begun in 1876, is inferior to none excepting the museums of Berlin, Paris, Strassburg, and perhaps Dresden. It now, moreover, enjoys the benefit of having a catalogue perfectly adequate to the requirements of modern science, more detailed than Michaelis's 'Verzeichniss,' less encumbered than Friederichs's 'Gypsabgüsse,' and as readable as it is reliable. The first edition, published in 1887, contained 414 numbers, the present one describes no less than 800, against 2,270 in Berlin, and 1,470 in Strassburg. Mr. Robinson, the curator of classical antiquities, has done his work very thoroughly; his descriptions of the most important items, such as the Lycian marbles, the sculptures from Olympia and the Parthenon, the Niobides, the Laocoön, etc., are written in a quiet and sober tone, without the least touch of that unscientific pathos which Friederichs sometimes, and more recent archaeologists too often, indulge in. The various information relating to each object is given in a most practical way—to begin with, the subject treated and the place where the original is preserved; then, in smaller type, the material (bronze, marble, etc.), the history of the work and mention of the collections it has belonged to, the restorations, and, finally, the publications, including only the more important references to archaeological literature.