

gained. Then the question arises, Is it worth the trouble? Yes, it is worth the trouble to those who have reason to trace the vaticinations of Max Nordau and their origin; and to those who desire to see what becomes of Von Hartmann's "Philosophy of the Unconscious" when reduced to religion, politics, ethics, and literary criticism.



### Americus Vesputius Rehabilitated<sup>1</sup>

One would naturally expect to find the particulars of an event so momentous as the discovery of the New World recorded in history with the utmost fullness and precision. And yet the greatest uncertainty exists concerning the landfall of Columbus and the authenticity of Vesputius's first voyage to the mainland. The older writers, notably Washington Irving and Alexander von Humboldt, identified the island of Guanahani, on which Columbus landed, and which he named San Salvador, with Cat Island, one of the Bahama group. Modern writers, beginning with Captain A. B. Becher, regard Watling Island as the true Guanahani. The older writers, adopting the views of Humboldt, pronounced Vesputius's account of his voyage of 1497 a forgery, while the investigations of Varnhagen rehabilitate the versatile Florentine as the discoverer of the mainland. To present the argument in favor of identifying Guanahani with Watling Island and that in favor of accepting the authenticity of Vesputius's voyage of 1497, together with the documentary evidence on which those arguments are based, is in effect the purpose of John Boyd Thacher's work, "The Continent of America." Mr. Thacher's private collection of original authorities, printed and autographic, relating to the discovery of America is exceptionally complete. He has, therefore, a first-hand knowledge of the documents in evidence, copies of most of which are contained in his own library. The work before us, beautifully printed on hand-made paper and generously illustrated, contains, besides citations and translations from rare books, a full series of reproductions of old maps illustrating the growth of the cosmography of the New World. This is by far the most sumptuous bibliographical and cartographical work relating to the discovery and naming of America that has yet appeared in English.

We will note briefly some of the more interesting points in the argument rehabilitating Americus Vesputius. It has been said that he could not have undertaken the voyage of 1497, inasmuch as contemporaneous government documents show that he was present in Spain from January 12, 1496, to May 30, 1498. It has been argued that the internal evidence of his own account of the voyage of 1497 proves that that voyage was identical with the one he undertook in 1499. It has been asserted that the voyage of 1497 is not corroborated by contemporaneous writers.

Americus Vesputius came to Spain from Florence as agent of the commercial house of the Medici. Apparently in 1493 he formed a connection with the Florentine merchant Juanoto Berardi, resident at Seville. On the 9th of April, 1495, Berardi signed a contract with the Spanish Government to furnish twelve caravels for Atlantic voyages, the vessels to be sent to sea in three squadrons of four each at different periods during that year. In December Berardi died, having turned over only the first squadron. Vesputius, representing the estate of Berardi, sent to sea the second squadron on February 3, 1496. These particulars are from memoranda in MS. extracted by Juan Bantista Muñoz from account-books in the Casa de Contracion at Seville. Navarrete had access to the documents of Muñoz, and in speaking of a payment made from the treasury to Vesputius on January 12, 1496, observes that Vesputius "went on attending to everything until the armada was dispatched from San Lucar." Humboldt understood the armada dispatched from San Lucar to be the one with which Columbus sailed on his third voyage on May 30, 1498. Others, however, understand the San Lucar armada to be the squadron sent to sea by Vesputius on February 3, 1496, and conjecture that the four vessels with which he made his first voyage were the last squadron furnished under the Berardi contract. Mr. Thacher says that the first two squadrons were furnished before the death of Berardi, and that the one sent out by Vesputius on February 3, 1496, was the last; but he unfortunately does not indicate his authority. At any rate, so long as the San Lucar armada cannot be connected with the third expedition of Columbus, there is nothing to show that Vesputius was present

in Spain during the time of his alleged first voyage—May 10, 1497, to October 15, 1498.

The argument which seeks to identify Vesputius's voyage of 1497 with his voyage of 1499 is based upon a translator's error. The only account of Vesputius's first voyage is that contained in his letter to Piero Soderini. A Latin version of this letter appeared in Martin Waldseemüller's famous "Cosmographie Introductio," published at St. Dié in 1507. The Latin translation was made from a French version of the Italian original. The Italian text is known to exist in four copies only. The French version is lost. The Latin translation is to be found in any library of some pretensions. In the Latin Vesputius is made to say that he visited the "province of Parias." The Ojeda expedition which he accompanied in 1499 visited Paria in Venezuela. To connect Parias with Paria is an easy matter phonetically. But an examination of the Italian text reveals the fact that Vesputius wrote not Parias but Lariab, and that the longitude and latitude which he gives for Lariab places that "province" not in Venezuela but on the coast of Mexico. If we accept the account given in that text, the landfall of Vesputius on the mainland took place on the coast of Honduras, not far from Cape Gracias á Dios, one week before that of the Cabots.

The silence of contemporary documents concerning Vesputius's first voyage may be explained by the fact that the expedition he accompanied would be known by the name of the leader (Vesputius held a subordinate position, probably that of "astronomer"), which he omits to mention. The only expedition to the Gulf of Mexico before 1508 to which we find any reference is that of Vicente Yañez Pinzon. The date 1506 commonly assigned to this expedition rests upon the unsupported statement of Antonio de Herrera, whose great work was published in 1601. There is reason to suspect that Herrera's date is incorrect, for Peter Martyr (writing before 1508), Gomara (1554), and Oviedo (1526-35) all affirm that Pinzon's expedition was made before 1500. The maps of La Cosa (1500) and Cantino (1502) also give correctly the outlines of Cuba, Florida, and the Gulf of Mexico, a further proof that those parts must have been visited about the time of Vesputius's first voyage.



*History of the Jewish Nation after the Destruction of Jerusalem under Titus.* By the Rev. Alfred Edersheim, M.A., D.D., Ph.D. Revised by the Rev. Henry A. White, M.A., Fellow of New College, Oxford. With a Preface by the Rev. William Sanday, D.D., LL.D., Margaret Professor of Divinity and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford. (Longmans, Green & Co., New York.) In the "History of the Jewish Nation," published by Longmans, Green & Co., we have a new edition of a work written by Dr. Edersheim when a young man, which, when published, quickly passed into a second edition. It is now reissued under the editorial supervision of the Rev. H. A. White, Fellow of New College, Oxford, who has made substantial additions based on the author's later writings and on the literature of the subject which has appeared since the work was first written. There is also a preface by Professor Sanday, who writes: "Dr. Schürer and Dr. Edersheim may be said to be the complements of each other; with the one the center of gravity rests in the Greek and Roman sources, and in the balanced judgment of the trained Western philologist; with the other, in the Talmud and the inborn imaginative sympathy with every side of Jewish life. I hope and believe that something of these double excellences will be found in this new edition as it has been prepared by Mr. H. A. White, to whose loyalty and care I gladly bear witness." The work was never completed according to the original plan, and the present volume brings the history down only to the extinction of the Patriarchate in Palestine in 425 A.D. It deals with many and most interesting details, especially with the internal history of this wonderful people, their social condition and habits, their philosophy, schools, great teachers, and religion. It is greatly to be regretted that we cannot have the completion of a work so desirable and necessary, for which Dr. Edersheim was so peculiarly fitted by his Hebrew birth, his Christian faith, his ample learning, his intimate acquaintance with Jewish life and literature, and his interesting style.

*Agnosticism and Religion.* By Jacob Gould Schurman, President of Cornell University. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.) There are three parts in this very substantial little book. In Part I. President Schurman treats of Huxley and Scientific Agnosticism in a sympathetic and appreciative estimate of Huxley's scientific work, and a trenchant criticism of his attitude toward religious faith. Part II. is a keen examination of Philosophical Agnosticism, in which the author claims that it "has been the most potent factor in the movement of the human spirit towards a true apprehension of its divine original," but this is because "the effort to paralyze reason only provokes reason to brace herself for another flight. . . . That he (the Agnostic) can make such a demonstration is the refutation of what he demonstrates." The Agnostic "misrepresents the subject of knowledge," he "misreports the elements of knowledge," he "misunderstands the meaning of knowledge." These two parts prepare for Part III., in which the author develops his conception of "the spiritual religion of Christ," which he believes is to supplant "the speculative religion of Christen-

<sup>1</sup> *The Continent of America: Its Discovery and Its Baptism.* An Essay on the Nomenclature of the Old Continents, a Critical and Bibliographical Inquiry into the Naming of America and into the Growth of the Cosmography of the New World, together with an Attempt to Establish the Landfall of Columbus on Watling Island, and the Subsequent Discoveries and Explorations on the Mainland by Americus Vesputius. By John Boyd Thacher. William Evarts Benjamin, New York. \$25.

dom." He traces the three stages, the religion of cult, of dogma, of spirit, each lower stage being taken up into the succeeding and higher stage, contributing its permanent truth to the final perfection. The Religion of the Spirit "will maintain a social organization," for "the church is rooted in the nature of things;" "it will not need a unique or separate sect;" "it will make its home with any of the religious bodies which will recognize it;" "it will lead to a modification, if not to an abandonment, of the conception of authority in religion," and "it will be not only theistic but Christian. In the new dispensation of the spirit, as in the old of dogma, He (Christ) must therefore, in some sense, if not the orthodox sense, continue to be our Mediator and Saviour." The book is full of thought, provocative of thought, clear and interesting in style, and very pertinent to the intellectual and spiritual needs of the day.

*The Jewish Scriptures: The Books of the Old Testament in the Light of their Origin and History.* By Amos Kidder Fiske. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.) The author defines the purpose of this volume as being to present the history and literature of the ancient Hebrews, as contained in the Old Testament, in a clear, concise, and candid way, "accepting the benefit of the light revealed by modern research and learning, and applying the same calm judgment to which we are accustomed in dealing with the productions of other ancient peoples;" "his hope has been to enable the 'ordinary reader' to share the privilege of the scholar and the divine in studying with greater interest and higher appreciation the remarkable productions of the ancient Hebrew genius." The purpose is a most useful one. It is a necessary limitation of an attempt to cover so much ground in a volume of moderate size that authorities cannot be cited nor reasons given for the positions taken, but it unfortunately leaves the "ordinary reader" in a very helpless condition. He cannot tell what are the results agreed on by the majority of the most competent and most devout scholars, and what is simply the author's own conclusion, and the author is not, and does not profess to be, a scholar. Nothing is said of the principles on which the work of criticism proceeds, no information given by which the inquirer can know on what the method is founded which so easily sets aside the beliefs of ages. Only those results are offered which the author accepts, without anything, in method or spirit, to fulfill that mediatory office so essential when extreme positions are offered to those whose thought and experience have attached them to the convictions and beliefs which it is sought to supplant. In all such effort it is essential that the spiritual use of the Bible should be kept in mind, that the reader may understand how the life which has been fed from the Bible as he has read it is to be equally fed through the new reading which he is invited to adopt.

Alfred Austin, the Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland, has perpetrated a poem, in the form of a drama, upon the late King Alfred, and Mr. (for the present) Alfred Austin calls the said play *England's Darling*. This title has made the reviewers foam at the mouth, but one who is Laureate can serenely look down upon the ravenous pack of reviewers and piously say (or sing), *Quare fremuerunt gentes!* He has hardihood who can write this line:

The very primroses  
To his sad gaze beseech but ruefully.

After a painstaking search no one has been found, except professional book-reviewers, who has read this play of England's Poet Laureate. How then are the publishers to live! It is not bad, it is not good, it is Laodicean literature. In vain one ransacks Mr. Alfred Austin's drama in four acts for some quotable lines; there are no *morceaux* discoverable. But what about the structure of the whole poem? Alas! it is faultily faultless. In short, the composition is undeniably "in good form." Better the ruggedness of Browning, better Tennyson with his echo of the book last read, better Arnold with his restlessness of soul, better Rossetti with his æsthetic mysticism, than all these well-ranged platitudes!

The ethics of Christ and the ethics of Christendom do not coincide. We have a mixture, for our moral ideas are partly deductive and *a priori*, and partly inductive and evolutionary. Some one has said that ethics is the science of ideal humanity. This is fanciful. Only the Divine could sufficiently know human social relations to set forth a science of them. Dr. Cornelius Walker, of the Episcopal Theological School at Alexandria in Virginia, has modestly published a volume of *Lectures on Christian Ethics*. The book may be regarded as a simplified compend of more technical and extensive works. He does not appear to make any claim to originality of idea and treatment, or to any profundity and breadth of thought. It is simply an easy manual of ethics that can be used with not very advanced classes. (T. Whittaker, New York.)

### New Books

[The books mentioned under this head and under that of Books Received include all received by The Outlook during the week ending August 28. This weekly report of current literature will be supplemented by fuller reviews of the more important works.]

*Thirty Studies in the Gospel by St. John*, by W. W. White, Ph.D., is a series of short chapters upon the unity and purpose of the "faith book" of the New Testament. The studies are accompanied by many diagrams, which, however, need—rather than furnish—explanation. (Fleming H. Revell Company, New York.)—*Protestantism*, by Edward P. Usher, A.M., LL.B., is a vigorous plea for the catholicity of the Protestant Episcopal Church. That Church, urges the author, is in theory inclusive, though in practice it may be exclusive; in theory

is democratic, though in practice it may often be aristocratic; in theory is on the side of freedom, though in practice it may sometimes seem on the side of ecclesiasticism. The author believes that those who love Christianity, as distinguished from the actual life of the Church, and those who love truth and the freedom to express it, may unite within the Protestant Episcopal Church and make it their organization. (Lee & Shepard, Boston.)—*The Church's One Foundation, and Other Sermons*, by the Rev. B. F. Barrett, is a series of spiritual sermons by a Swedenborgian, whose version of the descent of the New Jerusalem is through the transformation of the Church and society into conformity with the law of Christ. (Swedenborg Publishing Association, Germantown, Pa.)—*The Secret of Guidance*, by F. B. Meyer, is a little volume of meditations upon the nurture of a deeply religious life. *Through Fire and Flood*, by the same author, has for its theme the fact of our guidance and the needlessness of fear that all things will not work together for good to those who try to make God's will their own. (Fleming H. Revell Company, New York.)

A work of great value to the Biblical student is *Recent Research in Bible Lands*, edited by Professor Herman V. Hilprecht. It contains chapters by Professor A. H. Sayce, Dr. W. H. Ward, Professor J. P. Mahaffy, Dr. F. J. Bliss, and other eminent scholars. The book embodies the results of recent research, is clear and interesting in style, and is well illustrated. We shall examine it more closely later on. (John D. Wattles & Co., Philadelphia.)

*The History of the Hutchinson Family* is told in two thick volumes by Mr. John Wallace Hutchinson. An introduction for the work was written by the late Frederick Douglass. The story of this unique singing family is in itself an interesting one, and their aid to the anti-slavery and other reform causes was effective. The book abounds in anecdote and reminiscences of famous people. While a certain amount of condensation would have improved the volumes, they have a great deal of readable matter. (Lee & Shepard, Boston.)

We wonder why Mr. Richard Shelburn, in *Our Humor*, puts "(sic)" after about every twenty words on nearly every page, and puts an equal number of words in capitals. The whole book is a typographical and mental mystery. It certainly is not funny; we don't know *what* it is, or *why* it is. (Columbia Book Company, New York.)—Another literary mystery is *Beyond the Bank of Mist*, a poem by J. R. Baxley. (Peter Paul Book Company, Buffalo.)

Athletes will like to read William Lindsey's *Cinder-Path Tales*, which have a novel field for fiction in relating incidents connected with track athletics. (Copeland & Day, Boston.)

A valuable addition to an excellent series of small books on popular science is Mr. John Munro's *Story of Electricity*. It covers a great deal of ground in little space, is recent enough to include the X rays, and has been specially adapted to American readers. (D. Appleton & Co., New York.)



### Literary Notes

—Dean Farrar is understood to be writing his reminiscences.

—Mr. Andrew Lang's long-expected biography of John Lockhart will be published by the Messrs. Scribner in the fall.

—Taine left a lot of manuscript poetry, now in the possession of M. de Hérédia, of the French Academy, who, in justice to the historian, it is said, will allow no one to read it.

—John Ruskin's publisher says that since 1871 there has never been a loss on any of that author's works. For a good many years Ruskin received over \$25,000 annually in royalties. Strange as it may seem, none of Ruskin's books have ever been translated into a foreign language.

—Philip James Bailey, the author of "Festus," is still living at Nottingham, England, and, although in his eightieth year, is wonderfully hale and hearty. It is considerably over half a century since "Festus" appeared, and for a time it had an enormous sale both in England and America. A cheap edition, the eleventh or twelfth, was published in London not many years ago.

—A new and complete edition, in eight volumes, of the works of J. M. Barrie, including his latest books, "Margaret Ogilvie" and "Sentimental Tommy," is announced by the Messrs. Scribner. It is to be called the Thistle Edition, and will be printed by De Vinne from new plates, and illustrated with sixteen photogravures. Each volume will be provided with a preface by the author.



### Books Received

*For the Week ending August 28.*  
D. APPLETON & CO., NEW YORK  
Munro, John. The Story of Electricity.  
COLUMBIA BOOK CO., NEW YORK  
Shelburn, Richard. Our Humor. \$1.50.  
COPELAND & DAY, BOSTON  
Lindsey, William. Cinder-Path Tales. \$1.  
LEE & SHEPARD, BOSTON  
Usher, E. P. Protestantism. \$1.50.  
Hutchinson, J. W. History of the Hutchinson Family. 2 Vols. \$5.  
THE PETER PAUL BOOK CO., BUFFALO  
Baxley, Isaac Rieman. Beyond the Bank of Mist: A Poem. \$1.  
FLEMING H. REVELL CO., NEW YORK  
Meyer, F. B., B.A. Through Fire and Flood. 50 cts.  
Thurston, Mabel Nelson. "God's Box." 10 cts.  
Elliott, E. S. Expectation Corner. 10 cts.  
White, Professor W. W., Ph.D. Thirty Studies in the Gospel by John. 50 cts.  
Meyer, F. B. The Secret of Guidance. 50 cts.  
SWEDENBORG PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION, GERMANTOWN, PA.  
Barrett, Rev. B. F. The Church's One Foundation, and Other Sermons.  
JOHN D. WATTLES & CO., PHILADELPHIA  
Hilprecht, Herman V. (Editor). Recent Research in Bible Lands.