

Puritanism goes for nothing. "The first note of the resurgent church," the author tells us (p. 158), is "its sacred and eternal secularity." For its next note it "will utterly shatter the caste of goodness and definitely abandon the attempt to mark a distinction between good persons and the bad." In the midst of all this rant, cant, and confusion, flashes of truth shine out, like gems which had dropped out the coronet they belonged in and which their present owner did not know what to do with. One such example is his remarks on the democratic tendency to measure things by bulk rather than moral quality or superiority (pp. 164 and 5). A little later he drops again into cant and writes (p. 167), "Never were the poor so poor and miserable—never did the mill grind so cruel and so fine." It is a thousand pities to see so much vigor of thought and style come to naught and end in nothing. The moral order of the universe disappears. "There is no Destiny—there are only opportunity and an infinite waiting for the coming of the poets and the artists who shall rejoice in Life on any terms, hearing the singing in the heart of God and sending back a brave antiphonal across all the deserts and wildernesses of the world." Perhaps Mr. Ferguson knows what this means. We do not.

THE RELIGION OF DEMOCRACY: A Memorandum of Modern Principles. By Charles Ferguson. Funk and Wagnalls Company. \$1.

The peril that lies nearest the author of this much vaunted book is rant. He writes himself out in his first fifty pages and after that his supply of emotions is too much for his stock of ideas. As other critics have remarked, there is something in the first chapters to remind one of Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*, though very little to recall the severe tones of Emerson. The author, however, controls himself; holds his emotions and inspirations well in hand and writes in a bold, perturbative, apothegmatic style which is all very good, so long as there is plenty of good sense and purpose behind it, but which becomes a very different thing when the ideas give out and it drops into rant and cant like this: "The loftiest thing in a man is not his pure reason; it is in this that he draws nearest to the primal, passive, dream state of the undifferentiated crowd, and to the mind and instinct of animals. A man is a man not because his mind reflects the world with ideal variations; the mind of a dog does that. He growls in his dreams to prove himself capable of abstract and conceptual thinking. And every donkey is a master of inductive science and argues carrots in general from particular carrots. A man is a man not because of his percepts or his concepts, but because he understands the world somewhat, believes in it, and will improve it."

The first chapters of the book give some promise of a strong assertion of morality, but it gradually dies out until the book drops into unrelieved naturalism and all its brave spiritual