

poetry is not poetry at all. These reasons are two, pertaining to form and range of thought. George Eliot, according to Miss Cleveland, is not a poet, first because effort is so perceptible in her verse, and Miss Cleveland is with Ruskin in believing that "no great intellectual thing was ever done by great effort;" secondly, George Eliot's verse is not poetry because of its agnosticism concerning the unseen. The points are well-made, and a great many will agree with them. If Miss Cleveland's method of setting them forth is essentially feminine, the result is none the less interesting, rather more. Phrases born of the exigencies of the lecture-platform are frequent—"the antipode of agnosticism;" "Byron's negatives amount to an affirmative;" "the sadly carnal Swinburne." There is a comparison of George Eliot with Shakespeare which is assuredly original:

From one of his plays, replete with his incomparable wit, wisdom, and conceit, you emerge as from an ocean bath, exhilarated by the tossing of billows whose rough embrace dissolves to tenderest caress, yet carries in itself hints of central fire, of utmost horizon, of contact with things in heaven and earth undreamt of in our philosophy. You come from one of George Eliot's poems as from a Turkish bath of latest science and refinement—appreciative of benefit, but so battered, beaten, and disjointed as to need repose before you can be conscious of refreshment.

The essay on "Reciprocity" is full of fresh and breezy thoughts. "The world is a market, and men and women are the buyers and the sellers," is the text. Everywhere *quid pro quo* is the rule. Too many people try to keep their thoughts to themselves, and "intellectual corners" are created which it is the duty of every right-minded person to break up.

I am convinced that people think enough; it is the utterance of thought that is needed. If the habit of brave attempt at this utterance could be formed, and despite all criticism, be persevered in, how much more should we give to each other! What a world of enjoyment and improvement would spring up! How Athenian would Yankee life become! A Socrates at every doorway, an Aspasia—without Aspasia's reproach—at every tea-urn, full of discourse that would exclude the weary pettiness of thoughtless talk. Do this for your neighbors, and you will be to them Ferdinands and Isabellas, making of them the discoverers of more than a continent, for they will discover themselves; and you will pay to them the debt you owe to those who have done the same for you.

In discussing "Altruistic Faith" Miss Cleveland handles pessimism without gloves. Her historical essays are equally fearless. She insists that if we find certain passages of history tinted with rose-color we shall not wash them over with the neutral tint of criticism. And bestowing upon the shade of Hume the opprobrious epithet "Philistine," she deals him a cuff on the ear that should make the bones of that persistent skeptic turn in the grave.

MISS CLEVELAND'S ESSAYS.*

THIS volume of essays has been one of the best advertised books of the day. The copy before us bears upon the title-page the words, so dear to an author's heart, "seventh edition," and above this pleasing legend is emblazoned a full-blown rose with bud attached, vaguely suggestive, we suppose, of seven more editions. Of course, excellent as these essays are, no one supposes that their popularity arises from their intrinsic merits, and yet the popularity is in a certain sense well bestowed. Miss Cleveland belongs to a worthy and interesting type of American women, and the exposition of her mental attributes here offered is a gratifying object of study. The totality of impression concerning the author one gets from the book is that of a well-read, mature-minded, independent woman who has grappled boldly with the intricate problems of this and other days, formed her own opinions, and spoken out freely the ideas thus formed in a picturesque, brilliant, vigorous style—a style evidently her own, and not wanting in the graces of luxuriant imagery, or the piquant attractiveness of idiomatic speech.

The first essay, that on "George Eliot's Poetry," is a brief statement of the author's reasons for believing that George Eliot's

* George Eliot's Poetry, and Other Studies. By Rose Elizabeth Cleveland. Funk & Wagnalls. \$1.50.