RECORD OF THE MONTHS.


We welcome this little book with joy, and a hope that it may be republished in Boston. It would find, probably, but a small circle of readers, but that circle would be more ready to receive and prize it than the English public for whom it was intended, if we may judge by the way in which Mr. Taylor, all through his prefatory essay, has considered it necessary to apologize for, or, at least, explain views very commonly received among ourselves.

The essay is interesting from the degree of acquaintance it exhibits with some of those great ones, who have held up the highest aims to the soul, and from the degree of insight which reverence and delicacy of mind have given to the author. From every line comes the soft breath of green pastures where "walk the good shepherds." Of the sonnets, we doubt the possibility of making good translations into English. No gift of the Muse is more injured by change of form than the Italian sonnet. As those of Petrarch will not bear it, from their infinite grace, those of Dante from their mystic and subtile majesty; so these of Angelo, from the rugged naiveté with which they are struck off from the mind, as huge splinters of stone might be from some vast block, can never be done into English, "as the old translators, with an intelligent modesty, were wont to write of their work."

The grand thought is not quite evaporated in the process, but the image of the stern and stately writer is lost. We do not know again such words as "concetto," "superna" in their English representatives.

But since a knowledge of the Italian language is not so common an attainment as could be wished, we ought to be grateful for this attempt to extend the benefit of these noble expressions of the faith which inspired one of the most full and noble lives that have ever redeemed and encouraged man. Fidelity must be the highest merit of these translations; for not even an Angelo could translate his peer. This, so far as we have looked at them, they seem to possess.
English dress, we think none, to whom they are new, the sonnets,—

"Veggio nel volto tuo col pensier mie.

"S'un casto amor, s'un pieta superna.

"La vita del mio amor non è cuor mio."

and others of the same pure religion, without a delight which shall

"Cast a light upon the day,
A light which will not go away,
A sweet forewarning."

We hope they may have the opportunity. It is a very little book with a great deal in it, and five hundred copies will sell in two years.

We add Mr. Taylor's little preface, which happily expresses his design.

"The remarks on the poetry and philosophy of Michael Angelo, which are prefixed to these translations have been collected and are now published in the hope that they may invite the student of literature to trace the relation which unites the efforts of the pure intelligence and the desires of the heart to their highest earthly accomplishment under the complete forms of Art. For the example of so eminent a mind, watched and judged not only by its finished works, but, as it were, in its growth and from its inner source of Love and Knowledge cannot but enlarge the range of our sympathy for the best powers and productions of man. And if these pages should meet with any reader inclined, like their writer, to seek and to admire the veiled truth and solemn beauty of the elder time, they will add his humble testimony to the fact, that whatever be the purpose and tendencies of the time we live in, we are not all unmindful of the better part of our inheritance in this world."

SELECT LIST OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.


This Discourse is pervaded by a deeper vein of thought than we are wont to look for, or to find in the occasional services of the pulpit. We should rejoice to know that there is any considerable number of persons among the congregations that assemble in the churches for Sabbath worship, who take delight in such simple, fervent, and practical expositions of religious truth as are here set forth. This Discourse, however, indicates more than it unfolds; it is not a complete and harmonious whole; and it will

be read with greater profit by those who watch for every gleam of sun-light, than by those whose eyes are open only to the broadest glare of noon.

The following passage expresses the feelings of many who are accustomed to distinguish between religion, as it existed in the divine idea of Jesus, and the religion which ventures to assume his name, as an exclusive badge at the present day.

"The occasion which assembles us is one of thrilling interest. At a day when the whole aspect of the church and the world seems to present strong tendencies toward revolution; while on all sides men seem to be outgrowing the tyranny of forms, and overlapping all former barriers which have been raised between themselves and perfect freedom, we come to consecrate this temple to the worship of the Father of our Spirits, and thus bear our humble testimony that we can find in Christian usages, and the Christian's faith, all that we need for our mental and spiritual advancement in the path to heaven. We feel, however, others may consider the subject, that in the Bible and in the Saviour, are revealed to us Infinite Truths, which man can never outgrow, which as yet the world has scarcely imagined. And although we do not believe that the Christianity of Society, or the Christianity of the Church, as they appear in the present age, are by any means perfect, we do feel that the Christianity of Jesus is perfect, perpetual, and eternal: that the age will never arrive when man cannot draw from the fountain of God's truth, the waters of life and salvation." — pp. 3, 4.

The characteristics of Christianity, as described by Mr. Robbins, and the offices of the church, are worthy of attention. In reading this statement, we cannot but be struck with the incongruity between the ideal church of the preacher, and the actual church of modern society.

"I have said that Christianity is emphatically the science of the soul; and I regard this view of the religion of Jesus as infinitely important. We have our Universities and our Schools which are instituted for the purpose of teaching and explaining the natural sciences and the philosophy of the intellect. But the Church is consecrated solely to the higher purposes of instruction in the knowledge of the human heart and conscience; in the mysteries of the soul, its laws and duties and destiny. We gather ourselves into this holy place to learn those mighty truths which relate to God and man. We come up hither from the world and its trials and dangers to listen to the wisdom of Jesus, and learn those deep lessons of faith and obedience and love, by which we are to become ripened daily into the image of Infinite Holiness. There is a higher life than that which most spirits live. A higher love than most spirits know. There is an infinity in the human soul which few have yet believed, and after which few have aspired. There is a lofty power of moral principle in the depths of our nature, which is nearly allied to omnipotence; compared with which the whole force of outward nature is more feeble than an infant's grasp. There is a might within the soul which sets at nought all outward things; and there is a joy unspeakable and full of glory dwelling in the recesses of the good man's heart too vast for utterance. There is a spiritual