

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE.¹

WHILE I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, I shall venture to suggest what would be the probable reactions of a representative cultured inhabitant of Mars, if, through the good offices of some celestial or quite other visitant, he should suddenly be confronted with three characteristic aspects of our terrestrial civilization. When made imperfectly acquainted with the strange medley of our religious beliefs and practices, considered apart from the civilizations to which they belong or have belonged, he would undoubtedly say: "Alas! these our brothers of a sister planet are surely insane!" When more methodically made acquainted with our boasted scientific explanations of the world order, he would presumably say: "Yes, in some respects we Martians have done very much worse; but, on the whole, could perverse ingenuity go further? I am reminded of that unfortunate person,—did you call him Greek? Sisiphus I think you called him,—who was doomed to push up forever the huge rock that was eternally falling back. Why this gratuitous responsibility for a world that seems possessed to fall down rather than fall up, which apparently would have been equally logical?" But when the world of art, as we conceive it, should have been presented to this our cosmoplanetary brother, I think he would begin, dimly, to comprehend. Perhaps he would muse: "I also have lived in Arcadia"; but then he would be almost sure to spoil everything by a gross misquotation, for he

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