that in almost every thing she ever wrote she had in view the advancement of the world. How she loved truth, and how she hated ignorance! If she was a harsh judge of her equals and superiors, she was a very kindly judge of "the little ones." She was an idealist of these in the best sense; saw what good there was in them, and laid hold of it with overmastering sympathy. She was no sentimentalist; but all injustice and oppression roused the passion of her life into a searing flame. Atheist, was she? I think not, seeing that she conceived the world to be advancing "under a law of Progress," and so believed not in a First Cause only, but in a Final Cause; in "one far off divine"—not "Event," nor consummation—but society still gradually unfolding. Infidel, was she? As not *believing* many things which others do believe, she was. But not as *faithless* to her friends or to humanity at large. Doing much, her doing was not the measure of her being. She was a character, a force, a presence, whom it was good to know; whom it will long be well to study and remember.

J. W. C.

2.—*Imaginary Conversations.* By WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR. First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Series. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

THE best books, when first they are written, command but a very small circle of readers. Though warmly cherished by these, and much delighted in, they are, so far as the great public is concerned, put upon the shelf, where sometimes they remain until it seems they are forgotten. But they really go into the niche of literary immortality, and generation after generation are taken down by a growing class of interested readers, who ponder them with ever new delight; until at last they become classics, which no really cultured person can afford to leave unread or unstudied.

Among these immortal books the "Conversations" of Landor are sure to obtain a place. Forty years ago a few of them first saw the light, when they immediately challenged the attention of the best minds in Europe, and were read and admired by a select number on this side of the Atlantic. But at that time the author personally was exceedingly unpopular, and for several years had been an exile from England on account of private and public difficulties and animosities. He was an avowed enemy both to the State and to the Church of his native country, being a republican in politics and a rationalist in religion. He had quarreled numberless times with various great and

little men, and was out of joint generally with the literary, political, and religious society of his day. He was a man of imperious temper, though most magnanimous disposition; a tremendous enemy to his enemy, and an equally generous friend to his friend. English politicians hated him, English publishers were afraid to venture with his books because of their radical opinions, and most of the English literati had no patience or sympathy with him; so that when he quitted England with disgust, and went to Italy with the avowed determination never to return, he carried with him the friendship of an exceedingly small number and the positive dislike of many.

All this evidently was not a good prelude to success in authorship, and nobody realized this more fully or keenly than Landor himself. Before leaving England he had made several most disastrous attempts to solicit public favor in behalf of his literary undertakings, having published "Gebir" and "Count Julian," and various lesser prose and poetic pieces, besides not a few Latin poems. It is true that old Dr. Parr, the friend of Dr. Johnson, had smiled upon him, and adopted him as a *protégé;* that Robert Southey was his bosom friend, and Wordsworth, and the Hares, and John Kenyon were his admirers; but the great multitude were either ignorant of him, or indifferent or inimical to him. In his preface to "Gebir" he had said: "If there are now in England ten men of taste and genius who will applaud my poem, I declare myself fully content." He had come to expect as little as that,—and even this morsel he seemed hardly to receive. The result was that he went to Italy with almost a sullen purpose not only never to see England more, but never again to strive for literary fame.

But who can resist his destiny? Landor's was to be an author, and to make books not for the hour, but for all time. After wandering from one place to another for about six years, and writing often to his friend Southey, and receiving frequent encouraging and soothing letters from him, with occasional ones from Wordsworth,—in one of which the latter says, replying to a letter wherein Landor had praised the "Excursion," "It could not but be grateful to me to be praised by a poet *who has written verses of which I would rather be the author than of any produced in our time,*"—Landor begins on a task the idea of which he had long cherished, that of writing dialogues, introducing as interlocutors some of the most famous men and women of ancient and modern times. Here at last he was to enter a field in which his genius should especially shine; one in which his splendid scholarship, his deep knowledge of history, his wonderful insight into human nature, his familiarity with politics and statecraft, art and literature, social laws and usages, and above all his fertile imagination and restless fancy

and keen wit and flashing sarcasm should find abundant scope and exercise. He was nearly fifty years old when he began to write the "Conversations," and brought to this noblest literary work of his life the fulness and ripeness of his powers.

The first mention of the "Conversations" having been begun is in a letter to Southey, under date of March, 1822. He says he has written several, and burned several others which he had commenced and partly finished. It was his habit, indeed, to write and burn alternately according as the spirit was upon him,—one fire being kindled within him, and he like enough to kindle with the fruits thereof soon another without. But in a short time—for his pen made headway like a steam-engine when he did write—he had saved enough from the flames with which to make a new venture on the public. In the more than six years that had elapsed since he left England there was time enough for him to forget in a measure his former disappointments, and to pluck up some hope of achieving better success. At any rate, when he had finished the manuscript of thirty-six "Conversations," he conceives the courage to send them to Longman, a publisher of Paternoster row, London; and then he sits down and waits. After weeks and months have sped, during which no word good or bad comes from Longman, he gets desperately impatient and then disheartened again, and finally writes to Southey thus:—

"I left to Longman the conditions on which he might publish my book, and I wrote again a full month ago to him, informing him how he might forward to me four copies. He has taken no notice whatever either of my Mss. or my letters. Will you do me the kindness to request him to send the former to Mawman [another publisher] who I believe will undertake it? This disappointment has brought back my old bilious complaint, together with the sad reflection on that fatality which has followed me through life, of doing every thing in vain. I have, however, had the resolution to tear in pieces all my sketches and projects, and to forswear all future undertakings. I try to sleep away my time, and pass two-thirds of the twenty-four hours in bed. I may speak of myself as a dead man."

This was disconsolate enough, surely; but worse was to come; and before the trouble was all over that "bilious complaint" had ample opportunity to persevere. The package containing the Mss. was many weeks reaching Longman, and at one time was thought to be lost. Finally, on the last of August—two months or more after it had left Landor's hand—it turned up at Longman's door. But that publisher found he had no use for it, and so it went to Mawman. It fared no better there; and the poor waif went floating on from door to door of many a publisher, refused by all and denounced by some. At last, Julius Hare, who was trying his best to protect the sad enterprise from

disaster, persuaded a friend of his, the proprietor of the "London Magazine,"—John Taylor by name,—to undertake the publication. Says Hare to Landor, by letter: "I was so weary of soliciting publisher after publisher, and so anxious to put the work into the hands of a respectable man, that I *forced* Taylor to undertake it." Landor had offered extravagantly generous terms to any publisher who would take his book, basing his expectations on his former ill luck; but Hare made better terms for him than he had hoped,—the agreement being that all profit and loss should be shared equally between author and publisher.

Taylor, perhaps trusting to Hare's judgment on the nature of the book's contents, had not carefully examined them before consenting to publish. At all events, he subsequently stoutly objected to certain passages which he deemed to be scandalous to the prevailing politics or religion. Taylor was a conscientious man, and had great respect for both Church and State, for neither of which Landor had much. In one of the "Conversations" there was a certain remark attributed to Cromwell, which the honest John could not stomach; and in the Dialogue between Middleton and Magliabecchi there was somewhat said about prayer, in which John scented heresy. Both Hare and Southey were reading the proofs of the book as it came out, and they labored with the publisher to overcome his scruples. No end of letters passed between these two friends and Landor concerning this new difficulty,—Landor stubbornly refusing to modify or omit any thing. At last Hare, despairing of effecting any compromise between author and publisher, and warmly anxious that the book should come out, took the responsibility of omitting the passage from Middleton; so the publication proceeded, and prayer was preserved for Taylor! We may remark, in passing, that this expurgation was subsequently the cause of coldness between Hare and Landor.

Finally, on the twenty-eighth of February, 1824, Southey had the immense satisfaction of writing to Landor that the book was really printed. It was in two volumes,—eighteen Conversations in each. The author had originally intended to dedicate the book to Wordsworth, and the poet of Rydal Mount had signified that he would be pleased and proud to receive it; but Landor subsequently refrained from such dedication, on the ground that he had written so contemptuously of the people in power, "that a sense of delicacy would not permit me to place Wordsworth's name before the volume."

And now Landor was fairly launched on fame: his literary immortality was begun. In sending him the first printed copy of the "Conversations," Southey wrote: "The book is making you known as you

ought to be; and it is one of those very few which nothing can put aside." And Wordsworth wrote in the same letter, "begging the space from Southey" to say it: "Your dialogues are worthy of you, and a great acquisition to literature. The classical ones I like best, and, most of all, that between Tully [Cicero] and his brother." Landor proudly replied to Southey: "Your letter, with the closing lines from Wordsworth, gave me incredible delight. . . . I never ask what is the *public* opinion of any thing I write. God forbid it should be favorable! for more people think injudiciously than judiciously. *Your* sentence has elated me." Landor, however, was far from being indifferent to the praise or blame of the literary portion of the "public," and the warm reception which his book met from this quarter was highly gratifying to him. It was sharply criticised, but it was enthusiastically praised. Hare wrote of it with admirable discrimination in the "London Magazine," and Hazlitt in the "Edinburgh Review." At the Universities it was the uppermost topic; and throughout the literary circle of England the "Conversations" produced a sensation which crowded hard on Byron's fame, who the same year met his untimely death in Greece.

But the book never has been, perhaps never will be, popular with any but the ardent lovers of literature pure and simple. With all such in every generation, it will have reading after reading; and from all such in this country Roberts Brothers will receive hearty thanks for presenting to us the "Conversations" in such a handsome edition. From thirty-six in number they afterwards grew to about one hundred and fifty,--the present edition containing one hundred and forty-seven. The Classical Dialogues, which comprise the First Series, are on the whole, perhaps, the most popular; though many of the others come near to divide the reader's admiration with these. The author shows a familiarity with classic life and thought which is nowhere surpassed, bringing upon the stage in the most lifelike manner the orators and sages of antiquity. Throughout, the philosophy expressed is true to the point of view of ancient life, while the style is almost beyond praise. The Dialogue between the two Ciceros has met with especial commendation. "A competent critic," says John Foster, "has declared that the sayings in it attributed to Cicero, on subjects especially his own, are such as might not only not have lessened but added to his fame." Francis Hare tells the story of Lord Dudley, that, during an illness in Italy, he asked a friend to read aloud to him this Dialogue; and to his friend's admiring question at the close, "whether, by Jove, it was not exactly what Cicero would have said," replied, "Yes, if Cicero *could* have said it!" A similar remark was made by Southey of the Dia-

logue between him and Porson,—that neither might have conversed as Landor had exhibited them, but that "we neither of us could have talked better." Of the other Dialogues, comprising the second, third, fourth, and fifth series, Julius Hare thought that "the most general favorite is that between General Kleber and some French officers." Hazlitt liked best the Dialogue between Lady Jane Grey and Roger Ascham, as to whose quiet sweetness and beauty he was enthusiastic. Carlyle so much admired some special features in the "Conversations," that he called Landor "the grand old pagan," the sound of whose writing he said was "like the ring of Roman swords on the helmets of barbarians." Emerson's liking for these master-pieces of literature is not less. He says of the author: "He exercises with a grandeur of spirit the office of writer, and carries with it an air of old and unquestionable nobility. His acquaintance with the English tongue is unsurpassed. Of many of Mr. Landor's sentences we are fain to remember what was said of those of Socrates,—that they are cubes, which will stand firm, place them how or where you will." To see "the faces of three or four writers" Emerson says was one of his principal motives in visiting Europe, for the first time, in 1833; and these "three or four writers" were Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, and Carlyle.

Certainly, these books are not without defects and faults; but it would be a task as ungracious as it were needless to point them out, when the whole work is of such transcendent merit. The praise which Julius Hare bestowed on the "Conversations,"—that he "found creations in them comparable only to Sophocles or Shakspere,"—does not seem too great; nor that of Hazlitt, that to him "it appeared that the historical figures they evoked were transfused with nothing short of the very truth and spirit of history itself." Fresh from the reading of these books, my mind and heart all aglow with the truth and beauty of them, I could not possibly bring my pen to speak of them with any faint praise. I have read every Dialogue—classical, political, literary, and miscellaneous—with sustained delight and interest; and to all whose taste is keen for a literary treat, and who have not already enjoyed this rare one among the rarest, I say, Go at once and read Landor's "Conversations."

A. W. S.

3.—*The Principles of Sociology.* By HERBERT SPENCER. New York: D. Appleton & Co. pp. 704.

HERBERT SPENCER'S "Sociology" both gains and loses by being a single link in so long a chain as he has undertaken to forge. Of course