

Spencer's methods of conducting the home education, presuppose the fact that a parent, from the beginning, is himself so well disciplined, as never to make a mistake; and again it is taken for granted that in families one child is reared at a time, and instead of dealing with the child as a social being from his babyhood, and treating of his relation to his baby brethren, our theorists prate of the relation between parent and child, and omit to provide for the innumerable difficulties, that having their source in the selfish nature, arise and perplex the parent of a half dozen different natures around one hearth, and tax his powers of equity and judgment beyond their capacity. Then, in order to develop the ideal man, we must demand another condition and say, "Give us a Happy Valley and one child at a time upon which to concentrate our energies. I am not so sure that in the end we shall not have to say, 'Behold your ideal *selfish* man!' But, you say, shall we then institute no reforms, organize no societies for improvement, but continue in the old dog-trot way? If there were no Herbert Spencers' and Rousseaus, no Edward Bellamys and Henry Georges, no Susan B. Anthony and Gail Hamilton, would the world ever more forward or advance toward a higher degree of civilization? I might as well assume that because the stomach of an infant is not strong enough to assimilate meat and vegetables, it ought to be deprived of food altogether. Shall we cast aside as worthless, the seed, because, forsooth, the ground is not in a condition favorable to its growth?

We cannot take the ready-made world, give it a twist and turn it round to suit our theories. But on the principle that the child is father to the man, we may begin in our homes, in our schools, to systematically instill into the infantile mind such precepts as in a few generations will bring about a higher and better state of society.

When the children of the nation are practically taught that the good of the community is the good of the individual; when selfish personal interests give way to a noble, liberal-minded philanthropy; when, in a word, the moral and spiritual natures of our children shall receive their due degree of attention and development; then will the theory advanced by Tolstoi be admissible—that of allowing the child perfect freedom, spontaneous and unrestrained. Then will be born into the world a race of Little Lords Fauntleroy—a human family belonging in the highest sense

of the term, to the nobility. Then will political and social abuses right themselves, for that system of political economy will prevail that provides the greatest good to the greatest number. A system that will bring about a state of society conducive to the application of the most exalted of theories, because then will be fulfilled that greatest of conditions—*All things being equal.*

A. F. S.

LITERARY.

"THE MASTER OF THE MAGICIANS."

When a new book makes its appearance the same questions are asked about it that are asked on the advent of a new invention in the field of science. The curious public desire to know in whom it had its origin, what want it meets, what its merits are, and what its defects. "The Master of the Magicians" is a recent publication, and is naturally subject to the same questions as are other books. It will therefore be our aim in the following papers, to answer to the best of our ability, a few of these queries.

The book is a collaborated work by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps and her husband, Herbert D. Ward. Of Mrs. Ward an eminent writer has said, "She is one of our American successes," thus condensing the whole story of her career. Her husband is not so well known, and a few words with reference to him will perhaps be apropos.

Herbert D. Ward is the son of Dr. Wm. Hayes Ward of the Independent. He is a young clergyman of about twenty-nine, a graduate of Andover seminary. It was not, however, until after his marriage with Miss Phelps in October, 1888, that his name appeared in connection with the press. It will be remembered that it was Mr. and Mrs. Ward who carried away, last June, the one thousand dollar prize for the best written story in "The Youth's Companion." But "The Master of the Magicians" is the first work of importance in which Mr. Ward has been engaged.

This novel is of a historical character, founded on the Biblical story of the captivity of the prophet Daniel. The scene is laid in the ancient city of Babylon, during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

The story opens with a beautiful and detailed description of that most wonderful of ancient temples, the temple of Bel. We imagine our-