

gives most of the vowel letters their Italian sound, and proposes to introduce at first five new letters, to be followed by six more at a later time. But the chief peculiarity of his system is the "strengthening" of the vowels to denote their long sound. This is done in printing by the use of full-face type, thus, "uphold," and in writing by a heavier shading of the letter. This, as it seems to us, will be an insurmountable obstacle to the adoption of the system; for who will take the trouble, in rapid writing, to shade now and then a letter more heavily than the rest? Moreover, we gravely doubt if any system can be brought into use that contains new letters; and, if new letters are to be introduced, there are other systems that have quite as good a claim to be adopted as Mr. Knoflach's.

On the Relative Advantage of Tubs with Bottoms and Tubs without. Printed for the author. New York, for sale at 20 Cooper Union. 12°.

THIS anonymous work consists of two parts, the first being in the main a polemic against the views now held by many of the Swedenborgian clergy, and the second a statement of the author's own views. He maintains that the professed followers of Swedenborg misunderstand or misinterpret the doctrines of their master, and in particular he condemns their pantheism, which he thinks Swedenborg would have regarded with aversion. In this polemic against pantheism he makes some good points. He affirms also that the doctrines he criticises have no rational basis, they are tubs without bottoms; while the real doctrines of Swedenborg, as the author of this book understands them, have a basis that is all-sufficient. He then proceeds to state some of these doctrines in a simple and popular way, the leading one being a mystical interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity. Every thing that exists, he tells us, consists of three elements, — substance, form, and force; and of these elements he says, that, though "essentially different, they yet shall have a common name, 'person,' for each is a person." He then goes on to maintain that in the Divine Being substance is the Father, form the Son, and force the Holy Spirit. Such, according to our author, is the true doctrine of the Trinity, and the highest principle of religion. We greatly fear, however, that this tub also has no bottom, for we can see no rational basis for such mysticism. The author expresses himself well, and with greater simplicity than most writers on such topics, and his work will doubtless have an interest for Swedenborgian readers; but to other men it is not likely to be of much use.

The Way out of Agnosticism. By FRANCIS ELLINGWOOD ABBOT. Boston, Little, Brown, & Co. 12°. \$1.

THIS book consists of a series of papers based on lectures delivered at Harvard College, and originally published in the *New Ideal* newspaper. They are in the main a briefer and simpler statement of the views expressed in the author's "Scientific Theism." The introduction is a lively attack on the agnostics for maintaining a purely negative attitude, and refusing to make any attempt toward a positive theory of the universe. Mr. Abbot justly holds that mankind can not and will not remain without such a theory, and declares that the liberalism of the present day, on account of its negative character, is "infinitely inferior to the Christian mythology which it has displaced." Yet he maintains that liberalism alone can furnish the true constructive theory of the universe which is now so greatly needed, and his own aim is to present the outlines of such a theory.

As his theory has already been given to the public in his earlier and larger work, we need not devote much space to an analysis of it. His leading doctrines are these: 1. "The universal results of the special sciences, including the method common to them all, are the only possible data of philosophy or universal science." 2. "The universe is known as at once infinite machine, infinite organism, and infinite person, — as mechanical in its apparent form and action, organic in its essential constitution, and personal in its innermost being." This theory, in its identification of the deity with the universe, is pantheistic, but in affirming the personality of the deity, it is opposed to pantheism. Another of Mr. Abbot's essential doc-

trines is his realism, which he maintains in opposition to the phenomenalism or idealism of the prevailing modern philosophies. The book is written in a vigorous style; and, whether one agrees with its doctrines or not, it is interesting to read.

AMONG THE PUBLISHERS.

W. A. LINN'S article on "Co-operative Home-Winning," through building associations, will appear in the May *Scribner*.

— Henry Holt & Co. will publish soon "Introduction to Systematic Botany," by Charles E. Bessey, professor in the University of Nebraska, and author of Bessey's "Botanies" in the American Science Series.

— The last issue of *Garden and Forest* presents a complete list of the works treating of landscape-gardening which have been published in English, French, German, and Italian since 1625, the date of Lord Bacon's famous essay. It includes not only all books and pamphlets, but all articles and reviews on the subject, and covers nearly five closely printed pages. To make room for this list, which is a work of permanent value, the paper has been enlarged, and contains, besides an illustration of Clermont on the Hudson, with a description by Charles Eliot, its usual amount of matter in the various fields of horticulture and forestry.

— Frederick W. Whitridge, the well-known New York lawyer, who contributes an article to the April *Scribner* on "The Citizen's Rights as a Householder," tells the following story: "The series of papers upon the rights of citizens, of which this is the first, happened lately to be mentioned before a person of ripe and sound judgment, who has seen much of the world, but who is not a native of this Monte Cristo of nations; and this person, illuminated by the knowledge of many cities and men, thereupon exclaimed, 'Rights of citizens! You Americans haven't got any rights; or, if you have, you are all so afraid of each other, you dare not assert them.'"

— A curious phenomenon, in virtue of which electric cars are aided in ascending heavy grades, is alluded to by Joseph Wetzler in his article on "The Electric Railway" in the April *Scribner*. This phenomenon, which was probably first observed by Leo Daft, at his works in Greenville, N. J., in 1882, is, that, when the current passes from the car-wheel to the track, it causes an increased friction or resistance to sliding between them, the result of which is that slipping is to a large degree prevented, and heavier grades can be attempted. The explanation of this phenomenon, though not completely established, seems to lie in the direction of a slight welding action which takes place between the wheel and the rail, caused by the heat generated by the current.

— Messrs. Griggs & Co. of Chicago have published "Semitic Philosophy," by Philip C. Friese; and a singular book it is. The author professes to have the only true interpretation of Christ's doctrine of the kingdom of God, claiming that it is known "instinctively;" and he here gives a statement of the doctrine and its practical applications. He presents to us "so much of the unwritten, instinctive, rational, ideal, or natural constitution of the kingdom of God, or universal society of the races of mankind, as may, when universally assented to and adopted by tacit or express general agreement, be established as such in writing." It is drawn up in articles and sections like the Constitution of the United States, and provides for a republic of letters, a republic of the Church, a republic of industry, a republic of charity, and a republic of government, the organization and functions of each of which are duly set forth. What it all amounts to, we are unable to see. The book is a curious compound of crude social projects and hazy metaphysics, and that is all we can say for it.

— The opening article of *The Chautauquan* for April is by Professor James A. Harrison, Ph.D., LL.D., of Washington and Lee University, on "The Archaeological Club in Italy;" "Life in Modern Italy," by Bella Stillman, follows; the eminent philologist, Professor Federico Garlanda, of the University of Rome,