

THE NEW GOD AND OTHER ESSAYS. By RALPH SHIRLEY.

These remarkable essays have much of the depth and lucidity of Huxley, with a greater power of sustaining the interest of the casual reader. Mr. Shirley has the gift of bringing life into controversies long since dead and buried, of showing their importance to us, of restating them in terms of actuality. Moreover his standpoint is most sane. He is a questioner and critic not obsessed by the microscopic accuracy of the logician, but able to see things with human eyes.

To the metaphysician professed, therefore, he may seem shallow. One may quarrel for instance with his attempted disproof of the theory that the Universe is a single phenomenon. One may assert that without experience of Samadhi it is impossible to understand what is meant by the theory. Mr. Shirley cannot realize that Time and Space are accidental forms of our consciousness, no more essential to it than a harem skirt to the Venus of Milo.

Suppose a cinematograph show observed by a man on earth and a man on the sun (with a devil of a telescope!) at 10.40, and their observations compared. The solar will regard the terrestrial as a prophet, for the latter can see at 10.40 what the former sees at 10.48 or thereabouts. With space it is the same thing. Assume a fourth dimension, and Calcutta may rub streets with Buenos Ayres. The Battle of Waterloo may be merely one name for a phenomenon whose other names are John Brown, saucepan, geometry, etc., etc.

These conceptions are hard to realize intellectually. Mr. Shirley is too sane; has never tortured his mind to the point of grasping such whirlwinds and making them the breath of his nostrils. But one minute in Samadhi, and he would understand the actuality of such imaginations. Not that facts are so discovered; it is the attainment of a point of view.

And were this apex added to the broad pyramid of

his common sense, we should have another St. John the Divine, an incarnation of the Eagle Kerub, no longer as now merely the subtlety of the Serpent and the sharpness of the Scorpion.

LEO.

[We regret that urgency forbids detailed criticism of this admirable volume. We should in particular have liked to argue the "Rite" theory of the Crucifixion. As it is, we can only refer the author to J. M. Robertson's "Pagan Christs."—ED.]