

tion in this case is, that the "language" of my suppressed reply was improper, and justified exclusion of the reply from the *Journal of Ethics*. This assumption I deny with vigor; and, what is more telling than any denial of mine, Dr. Adler and Dr. Royce, as editors of the *Journal*, denied it themselves, when at first they both accepted the reply for publication, had it put in type, and sent me proofs both of the reply and of Dr. Royce's rejoinder to it. The subsequent rejection of my reply, under Mr. Warner's advice, cannot undo the effect of their previous sanction of it as *perfectly fit for publication*.

But the "evidence in full" on this point cannot be given without showing, by actual quotation, what really was the "language" to which Mr. Warner so unreasonably objected. I have no right to ask you to devote much space to such quotation; but, relying on your well-known fairness, I must ask leave to cite, as a fair specimen of the "language" objected to, the opening of the suppressed reply. The passages here italicised were marked by Dr. Royce himself as the grounds upon which he and his lawyer based their threat of prosecution and their suppression of the reply itself. It will be perfectly clear to any fair-minded man that they were aiming to force me either to concede that Dr. Royce's original article was a legitimate criticism, or else to lose all opportunity of being heard in self-defence.

That his article was a libel, and not a fair criticism at all, has been proved in my pamphlet beyond all possibility of a successful reply; and the reader, bearing this in mind, will judge for himself whether the "language" as such, or whether the effort to defend myself against the libel, was the real ground of Mr. Warner's threatening letter. The following passage from the suppressed reply is a fair sample of its "language" throughout:

"The mere fact that, in the *International Journal of Ethics* for last October, there appeared a hostile review of my book entitled 'The Way Out of Agnosticism,' by Dr. Josiah Royce, assistant professor of philosophy in Harvard College, would not induce me to break my uniform custom of silence in such cases, were it not that Dr. Royce *oversteps the limits of legitimate literary criticism, throws out personal accusations of a slanderous nature, and resorts to empty and undignified official denunciation* in order to flank indirectly a philosophical position which he has not ventured openly to assail. *His mode of attack is a marked case of 'reversion' to controversial methods which, common enough some centuries ago, are happily going out of use to-day. Dr. Royce presumes to accuse me, falsely and injuriously, of 'frequently making, of late, extravagant pretensions as to the originality and profundity of [my] still unpublished system of philosophy,' and of 'sinning against the most obvious demands on literary property rights'; and he even goes so far as to issue a solemn 'professional warning,' formally addressed to 'the liberal-minded public,' against myself as a philosophical thinker and author. Such tactics as these are unknown among reputable literary men. They are justified by no higher ethical principle than that which dictated the old pettifogger's advice to the young one: 'If you have no case, abuse the counsel on the other side.'*

"This paper, therefore, is written as a reply, not to a critique, but to a libel. If I notice below what Dr. Royce puts forward as 'criticisms,' it is not because they deserve to be noticed as such, but solely because they are made to serve as the ostensible warrant and support of his libellous 'professional warning.' And the only reason why I make my defence in these columns is that believing the 'liberal minded public' to be a just judge, I have greater confidence in the court of reason than I have in the courts of law.

"When civil-service reformers plead the urgent necessity of political reform, they are irrelevantly charged by the adherents of the spoils system with being 'hypocrites and pharisees.' Precisely so, when I plead the urgent necessity of philosophical reform, I am irrelevantly charged by Dr. Royce, in effect, with being a false pretender, a plagiarist, and an impostor. The charge is just as true in one case as in the other. But, be the charge true or untrue, the attention of keen and candid minds is not to be diverted by this perfectly transparent device from the main point of reform. In both cases, interests more important than any personal reputation are at stake; and loyalty to interests more important than my own reputation requires me now to expose Dr. Royce's endeavor to divert attention by irrelevant, useless, and utterly unprovoked vituperation from the main point of philosophical reform."

Will any fair man say that the "language" here used is other than temperate, dignified, and parliamentary? I protest against Mr. Warner's attempt to misrepresent the character of my "language," as improper in any degree. A libelled citizen has a right to defend himself against the libel; and, when Dr. Royce blew his bugle-blast of defiance, "We must show no mercy, as we ask none," he deprived himself of all excuse, in the eyes of men who prize the good old English principle of fair play, for seeking refuge behind a menace of prosecution. And here I must express my surprise at Mr. Warner's statement that "Prof. Royce sought my advice in consequence of threats of a law-suit from Dr. Abbot." I never threatened Dr. Royce with a law-suit at all.

FRANCIS E. ABBOT.

CAMBRIDGE, NOVEMBER 28, 1891.

[We cannot print any more letters respecting this controversy.—ED. NATION.]

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#### An Introduction to Spherical and Practical Astronomy.

By Dascom Greene, Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy in the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Boston: Ginn & Co. 1891. Pp. viii, 150.

CSP, identification: MS 1365. See also: Burks, *Bibliography*; MS 1371a (draft). This piece is unassigned in Haskell's *Index to The Nation*, v.

Dascom Greene (1825-1900) was graduated in 18 from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where he was appointed assistant professor of mathematics and practical astronomy. He wrote on both astronomy and mathematics, and was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

In this small and convenient volume is contained nearly everything of astronomy that an engineer will need. Unfortunately, the few omissions, such as precession, aberration, parallax, and refraction (the last not quite excluded), with the few excessive abridgments, are of radical importance. By adding two more sheets to the book, so as to include sufficiently these subjects, and amending it in some other respects, it may in a future edition be rendered a work of exceptional merit. Professor Greene, in his preface, by way of excuse for the omissions, says: "It [the book] claims to be no more than an introduction to the subject, and aims to present its first principles in an elementary and practical form for the use of beginners." But, in the first place, a student has no time to go through such a subject as astronomy twice; and it is not practical teaching to omit any practical topic in such a branch, to be taken up at a later period. In the second place, the class of students resorting to Troy, though they be beginners, must not be put off with any inferior presentation of a science. Indeed, logic and completeness are of even more importance in elementary than in advanced treatises. A book such as this might easily have been, which should touch upon every necessary matter with logical severity, giving all that is needed and excluding all that is superfluous, would serve as an intellectual tonic for the young man, and operate in some degree as a corrective to the dissipating and demulcent influences of other modern textbooks. Besides, in any subject, but above all in mathematics, it is a great advantage to keep the treatise which has been deeply conned, but which has been partly forgotten in after years, at one's elbow as a book of reference, and for that reason elementary works should be as nearly tabular in form as the nature of their subjects will permit, uniting the utmost brevity with completeness in certain systematic limits.

Prof. Greene's descriptions of instruments and the ways of using them are pretty good, but not full enough for practical needs. Thus, it is said that the adjustment of the principal focus of a transit instrument "may be verified by moving the eye so as to detect any parallax existing between the star and the wire." This does not sufficiently emphasize to the beginner the indispensableness of this operation; nor are the precautions to be observed in performing it pointed out. Nor is anything said about ascertaining the fixity of the parts of the telescope, the collimation of the objective, etc. Nor is the reduction of time observations set forth and illustrated in a practically adequate manner.

The mathematical deductions throughout the book are given with commendable clearness and brevity; but the treatment of the foundations of the method of least squares is decidedly antiquated. The principle of the arithmetical mean is assumed as self-evident. Such reasoning will not go down in our day, and to teach boys to be satisfied with it is a grievous wrong. It may, no doubt, be said that a book intended for boys who seek instruction solely as a means of livelihood should not notice mere speculative doubts, and should sedulously avoid opening temptations to purely intellectual engrossments, the joys of which their situation in life must forbid; and there is some truth in this. But there can be no advantage to anybody, in our swiftly progressive age, in being unable to distinguish bad reasoning from good. Good logic is the most fundamental thing which any kind of student can possibly be set to acquire.

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