

NIETZSCHE THE MAN.

As a rule the general public is not eager to learn about philosophy or philosophers, but just now there is one philosopher whose name has been on every tongue. That is Friedrich Nietzsche, who sought to substitute the Superman for the Christ as an exemplar of conduct. Rightly or wrongly Nietzsche, with his doctrine of the "will to power" and his scorn of meekness, humility, and other such virtues of Christianity—the "slave-religion" as he termed it—is believed to have been, though dead, a living force helping to drive his night-fatigued countrymen into their present terrible assault upon European civilization. He was rejected in his day by professorial and Imperialistic Germany, and he retorted upon it with the fierce invective of "Ecce Homo," but the Germany he derided has chosen for its ideal the most sinister tenets of his paradoxical and often inconsistent philosophy. Naturally, therefore, English readers are desirous of knowing what manner of man was this philosopher, whose teaching is supposed to have been largely instrumental in bringing so much pain and suffering upon mankind. His life story has been told by his sister, Frau Förster Nietzsche, who, save for short periods of estrangement and a few years spent with her husband in Paraguay, was the being most closely associated with him. The first volume of her biography was published in English a short while ago, and now comes the second and concluding volume, which appeared in Germany in 1913. Its title is "The Lonely Nietzsche" (London: Heinemann), and the translator, Mr. Paul V. Cohn, is to be congratulated on the excellence of his work. The volume begins with the breach between Nietzsche and Wagner in 1876, due to Nietzsche's scorn for what he considered to be his friend's apostasy in turning Christian. "Parsifal" was the rock of offence, and Nietzsche believed that its piety was pure hypocrisy, an attempt on Wagner's part to curry favour with the ruling powers of Germany. Frau Förster Nietzsche presents an intimate portrait of the brother she adored. She enables us to see him, so to speak, in mufti, to hear what he had to say as a man rather than as a public preacher or prophet about all manner of things, art and literature, travel and solitude, life and death. For the loneliness which undoubtedly was his lot during the latter years of his working life she blames his friends and associates, but her record proves beyond doubt that its main cause was the supreme egotism, the utter selfishness, of Nietzsche himself. This was displayed in a ridiculous way when he objected to her marriage simply because her husband would not bow the knee to him. It was his amazing egotism that gave its selfish tone to his philosophy; and, though this book does bring home to a reader the poignant tragedy of Nietzsche's battle with sickness, and ultimate lapse into an insanity induced in part at least by indulgence in drugs, it also confirms the idea that his teaching was essentially the teaching of a morbid personality obsessed with the thought of its own greatness.

CHESS STRATEGY.

"Chess Strategy," by Eduard Lasker (London: G. Bell and Sons), is a handy book of moderate dimensions by a namesake of the present chess champion of the world, Emanuel Lasker, and himself a master of European note. Its aim is to give an exposition of the principles of chess play by means of illustrative positions and comments, and to "appeal to the intelligence of the student" rather than to burden his memory, as would be done were the various ways in which games can be

his memory, as would be done were the various ways in which games can be opened set out in detail, as in an elaborate treatise. No doubt the openings have to be mastered in full completeness and fixed in memory by players who desire to shine in tournaments, but it is not for candidates looking for a high degree, with honours, that this work is published. It may be preferably said to be for students wishing to matriculate. First there are a few specific and general hints, exemplified by play on the board, and then follows a lucid discourse upon the general principles of the opening, to indicate how "position" develops itself. The story of the end game, to which all strategy leads up, precedes that of the middle game, in order to prepare the student for what has to come before telling him how the contest must be conducted, when the time arrives for him to rely on his own judgment. The final chapter is devoted to a pretty large selection of illustrative games by chess masters, taken from tournaments of recent date, and therefore tolerably fresh, if not absolutely new, to players who have not access to a full-stocked reading-room. Mr. Lasker's notes to these high-class contents are full, yet simple and easy to follow, and all in keeping with the main purpose of the book. Even players who have already taken their degree will find them interesting and instructive, since the possibilities of chess are inexhaustible, and light comes from all quarters. With indexes, "Chess Strategy" runs to 282 pages, which makes it light for handling.

ROAD-MAKING IN AUSTRALIA.

Motor-cars, motor-buses, and heavy commercial vehicles propelled by motors without doubt are finding out the weak spots in the system of road-making as we have known it in the past, and this more especially applies to the buses and lorries. But they have come to stay, and it is for the councils, therefore, to solve the problem of constructing roads that will stand the wear and tear of motor traffic. At this time, when road-construction is exciting such general interest, a second edition of Messrs. Coombs' "Australasian Roads" (Melbourne: George Robertson and Co. Proprietary Limited) is opportune. So much has been added and so much rewritten to bring this standard work abreast with the latest practice that it might almost be called a new book. Since the first edition appeared three International Road Congresses have been held—at Paris, Brussels, and London. The researches and discussions of these have been made use of. Chapters on reinforced concrete, hydraulics, electric tramways, and house refuse disposal have been added. While the authors primarily address themselves to practising engineers, there is much in the

book that will appeal to anyone who is interested in improving the existing highways of Australasia, and in building satisfactory new ones.

The effect of motor-buses on the road surfaces is a very "live" question just now. Their maximum speed is about 18 miles an hour, and with their great weight and solid tyres the authors point out that they will certainly discover the weak places in any road. The first effect is the production of cups and waves, that are deepened by the hammering of the heavily-loaded wheels as they fall from the crests into the troughs. It is suggested that weight might be limited to seven tons, and the speed to 12 miles an hour. As regards speed this is a debatable point. No doubt municipal councils will heartily endorse the suggestion; but neither the public nor the companies owning buses are likely to see eye to eye with the authors here. With 12 miles an hour as a maximum the average speed would be funeral, and assuredly no motor-bus service could survive in any area served by trams. Whether these vehicles should be compelled to pay special contributions towards the upkeep of roads is another vexed

trains. Whether these vehicles should be compelled to pay special contributions towards the upkeep of roads is another vexed question. The owners of buses would answer it with an emphatic "No!" They have, indeed, pointed out that they already pay large sums to the central Government through the Customs, besides registration and licensing fees. Each omnibus, for example, requires four sets of tyres a year. The duty would be approximately £98; the consumption of petrol is not less than 4,000 gallons a year, and on this the Customs would receive over £10; then there are heavy renewals, all dutiable, besides the original duty on a chassis, which would be at least £40. The companies could contend with some show of reason that a certain proportion of this duty ought to be handed over to the municipalities for road maintenance.

More destructive still are motor waggons, though for some reason they have managed to keep out of the fierce light that beats upon the buses. They are generally heavier than the motor-omnibus, and then they carry greater loads on stiffer springs. They are classed by Messrs. Coase as the most damaging of all vehicles, excepting only the heavily-loaded, narrow-tyred, timber jinker. In Melbourne they run at 15 miles an hour and over, with a total weight on a pair of axles of not much less than 15 tons. No ordinary road can withstand such traffic, and it is suggested that good wood-blocks on 9in. to 12in. of cement concrete, resting on a solid subgrade, should be provided for it. In England it is noted that the total axle load for motor waggons is not allowed to exceed 12 tons, and that the speed must be kept down to eight miles an hour.

Up to 20 miles an hour the authors consider that the ordinary motor-car does little damage to a well-made water-bound macadam, though at 40 miles an hour the same car might cause a considerable amount of wear and tear to the surface. For motor traffic, therefore, something more in the way of binding is needed. Painting the road with coal-tar has brought about great improvement at moderate cost, but unfortunately this requires to be done frequently, when there is much traffic. Asphaltic oil treatment gives more lasting results, and the tests made in Baltimore with these oils are referred to. Long stretches of main roads were treated, and after four years they showed but few signs of deterioration, though much fast automobile traffic had passed over them. Experiments have been made by the authors with asphaltic oil at Brighton, but these, they admit, were not at all successful, owing to the unsuitable quality of the oil. The preparations of pure bitumen have been tried, and should be useful, but the authors do not think that they have been long enough on the roads to enable a definite opinion to be formed as to their merits. In city and suburban areas it is suggested that the speed limit of motor-cars should not be over 20 miles an hour.

Dust prevention is treated with much elaboration. The main conclusions may be summarised thus:—In laying out new cities never give the streets on which the heaviest traffic is expected the directions of the prevailing hot winds. Never use street sweepings or loam as a binder. Tar-paint macadam where the traffic is not very heavy, and where the traffic is heavy extend wood blocks or other suitable pavement. For windbreaks encourage tree-planting, and have central shrubberies in wide roads. Make the use of wide tyres obligatory. In the outer suburban areas, where the cost of complete metalling would be prohibitive, fix the earthen sides with grass. But the authors point out that it is not fair in Melbourne or anywhere else to blame the roads for "all" the dust. Around Melbourne, they say, there are grassy and cultivated areas, from which thousands of

tons of sand and loam are raised when a hot wind is blowing.

SOLDIER'S LETTERS HOME.

"Letters from India and Persia" is the title of a volume prepared from recently discovered papers left by the late General Sir George Digby Barker, and edited by Lady Barker. The letters were written during the Persian war and the Indian mutiny, the period covered being from 1857 to 1859. Sir George Barker took part in the battle of Koonah, the bombardment of Mohammerah, and the expedition to Ahwaz; and in India he was with Havelock's column from first to last. After a distinguished military and administrative career he retired from the army in 1902, and he died a year ago. His letters are of great interest. They were regularly written for the comfort and entertainment of his mother, who at the time was almost blind, and whom he was constantly anxious to cheer. To this end he writes blithely without being flippant. Here is a specimen:—"We came suddenly on a hunt with a lamp on it, out of which emerged a dozen or more natives, one or two armed with muskets and bayonets. They surrounded us and muttered some words perfectly unintelligible, which we supposed to mean, 'Your money or your life.' Using the native language as well as I could, I suggested that I was not a proud man, but that I really had an objection to give away either. Upon this one of them produced a book entitled 'Rules and Regulations for Levying Tolls on Cattle and Carriages Passing from the Deccan to Concan,' by which I was made aware that it was neither my money nor my life that was required, but three-halfpence as toll for my horse." The letters are published by George Bell and Son, London (Melbourne: Melville and Mullen).