

it in his rapid way with the shell for a platter. We confess that we prefer the free-and-easy manner in its proper place to the diplomatic way of always treating the reader with sentiments of the highest consideration, and like a book all the more for having an Occidental flavor.

But it is not merely or chiefly as being among the cleverest and liveliest of modern light literature that we value Dr. Palmer's books. They have a true poetic value, and instruct as much as they entertain. While he is telling us a San Francisco story, the truth of the accessories and the skill with which they are grouped bring the California of 1849 before us with unmatched vividness. We have been getting knowledge and learning a deep moral without suspecting it, as if by our own observation and experience. In the same way "*Asirvadam the Brahmin*" is a prose poem that lets us into the secret of the Indian revolt. It is seldom that we meet with volumes of more real power than these, or whose force is so artistically masked under ease and playfulness. We prefer the "Old" part of the book to the "New." It seems to us to show a better style of handling. There is something of melodrama in the style of the California stories,—a flavor of blue lights and burnt cork. At the same time, we must admit that there is a melodramatic taint in our American life:—witness the Sickles vulgarity. Young America is *b'hoysish* rather than boyish, and perhaps the "New" may be all the truer to Nature for what we dislike in it.

"The New and the Old" is fittingly dedicated to the Autocrat of all the Breakfast-Tables, than whom no man has done more to demonstrate that wit and mirth are not incompatible with seriousness of purpose and incisiveness of thought.

*Napoleonic Ideas.* By Prince NAPOLEON LOUIS BONAPARTE. Translated by JAMES A. DORR. New York: D. Appleton & Company. 1859.

THIS publication has at least that merit which is one of the first in literature,—it is timely. Though we look upon the Emperor of the French as a kind of imperial Jonathan Wild, it does not the less concern us to make a true estimate of his in-

tellectual capacity. Nothing is more unwise than to assume that a man's brain must be limited because his moral sense is small; yet no mistake is more common. Napoleon the Third may play an important part in History, though by no possibility an heroic one. In reading this little volume, one cannot fail to be struck with the presence of mind and the absence of heart of which it gives evidence. It is the advertisement of a charlatan, whose sole inheritance is the right to manufacture the Napoleonic pill, and we read with unavoidable distrust the vouchers of its wonderful efficacy. We do not fancy the Bonapartist grape-cure, nor believe in it.

Mr. Dorr's translation is excellent. He understands French, and is able to do it into English elegantly and accurately without any trace of foreign idiom. This is no easy thing; for our general experience has been that translators read French like Englishmen and write English like Frenchmen.

*Country Life.* By R. MORRIS COPELAND. Boston: John P. Jewett & Company. 1859.

IN an article on "Farming Life in New England," published in a former volume of the "*Atlantic*," a valued contributor drew attention to the painful lack of beauty in the lives and homes of our rural population. Some attempts were made to show that his statements were exaggerated; but we are satisfied that they were true in all essential particulars. The abolition of entails, (however wise in itself,) and the consequent subdivision of estates, will always put country life, in the English sense of the words, out of the question here. Our houses will continue to be tents; trees, without ancestral associations, will be valued by the cord; and that cumulative charm, the slow result of associations, of the hereditary taste of many generations, must always be wanting. Age is one of the prime elements of natural beauty; but among us the love of what is new so predominates, that we have known the largest oak in a county to be cut down by the selectmen to make room for a shanty schoolhouse, simply because the tree was of "no account," being hollow and gnarled, and otherwise delight-

fully picturesque. Our people are singularly dead also to the value of beauty in public architecture; and while they clear away a tree which the seasons have been two centuries in building, they will put up with as little remorse a stone or brick abomination that shall be a waking nightmare for a couple of centuries to come. But selectmen are not chosen with reference to their knowledge of Price or Ruskin.

Mr. Copeland's book is specially adapted to the conditions of a community like ours. Its title might have been "*Rural Æsthetics for Men of Limited Means, or the Laws of Beauty considered in their Application to Small Estates.*" It is a volume happily conceived and happily executed, and meets a palpable and increasing want of our civilization. Whatever adds grace to the daily lives of a people, and awakens in them a perception of the beauty of outward Nature and its healthful reaction on the nature of man,—whatever tends to make toil unsordid, and to put it in relations of intelligent sympathy with the beautiful progression of the seasons,—adds incalculably to the wealth of a country, though the increase may not appear in the Report of the Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. Copeland's volume is calculated to do this, and his own qualifications for the task he has undertaken are manifold. Chief among them we should reckon a true enthusiasm for the cause he advocates, and a hearty delight in out-of-doors-life. He writes with the zeal and warmth of a reformer; but these are tempered by practical knowledge, and such a respect for the useful as will not sacrifice it to the merely pretty. His volume contains not only suggestions in landscape-gardening, guided always by the true principle of making Nature our ally rather than attempting to subdue her, but minute directions for the greenhouse, grapery, conservatory, farm, and kitchen-garden. One may learn from it how to plant whatever grows, and to care for it afterwards. Engravings and plans make clear whatever needs illustration. The book has also the special merit of *not* being adapted to the meridian of Greenwich.

We do not always agree with Mr. Copeland; we dissent especially from his prejudice against the noble horsechestnut-tree,

with its grand thunder-cloud of foliage, its bee-haunted cones of bloom, and its polished fruit so uselessly useful to children,—Bushy Park is answer enough on that score; but we cordially appreciate his taste and ability. His book will justify a warm commendation. It is laid out on true principles of landscape-farming. The stiff and square economical details are relieved by passages of great beauty and picturesqueness. The cockney who owns a snoring-privilege in the suburbs will be stimulated to a sense of latent beauty in clouds and fields; and the farmer who looks on the cosmic forces as mere motive-power for the wheels of his money-mill will find the truth of the proverb, that more water runs over the dam than the miller wots of, and learn that Nature is as lavish of Beauty as she is frugal in Use. Even to the editor, whose only fields are those of literature, and whose only leaves grow from a composing-stick, the advent of a book like this is refreshing. It enables him to lay out with a judicious economy the gardens attached to his Spanish manor houses, and to do his farming without risk of loss, in the most charming way of all, (especially in July weather,)—by proxy. Without leaving our study, we have already raised some astonishing prize-vegetables, and our fat cattle have been approvingly mentioned in the committee's report. We have found an afternoon's reading in Mr. Copeland's book almost as good as owning that "place in the country" which almost all men dream of as an ideal to be realized whenever their visionary ship comes in.

*High Life in New York.* By JONATHAN SLICK. Philadelphia: Peterson & Brothers.

THE advantages of a favorable introduction are very obvious. A person who enters society fortified with eulogistic letters, giving assurance of his trustworthiness, so far as respectability and good behavior are concerned, is tolerably sure of a comfortable reception. But if, unable to sustain the character his credentials ascribe to him, he immediately begin to display bad manners, ignorance, and folly, he not only forfeits the position to which he has gained accidental access, but also