

tion of him to the cause in which they are engaged.

It is this last moral which, lightly accented, is yet likely to remain most surely with the reader. For in spite of the prominence given to Sir George Tressady, the book is substantially a sequel to *Marcella*. The author has lavished most pains upon her, and the ethical problem involved in her career is plainly the one which concerns her most deeply. Mrs. Ward is a victim of the *Zeitgeist*, that scourge or that stimulant of literature, as one may choose to take it. Social reform, woman, politics, the relation of man and woman in the apparent readjustment of society, here is double, double, toil and trouble, and Mrs. Ward puts her fagots on the fire and watches the caldron bubble. Fiction is the prevailing form of literature, and she accepts it as the inevitable; and yet by a curious reversion in the end to her natural expression, after a violent dramatic pose in the crushing out of Sir George Tressady's life in a mine whither he has gone to rescue his men, she goes on and on with a sort of review of her hero's nature. For her interest is not primarily in the men and women whom she creates; it is in the people of the actual world in which she lives, and whom she tries to transfer to her novel. In doing this she is all the while preoccupied with the circumstances and the inner life of the prototypes of her fictitious characters so that when finally she takes leave of her hero, it occurs to her

to sit down and look at him in his death-struggles and try to explain him to herself and her friends. What artist who had gone out of herself through six or seven hundred pages in the disclosure of her hero would find it necessary at the end to bring in a sort of heavenly candle and go searching round in the poor man's heart and brain?

There is a humorous parable by Mr. James, entitled *The Real Thing*, where an artist designing to illustrate a novel of contemporaneous polite society, thinks himself at first very fortunate in having a real lady and a real gentleman to act as models, but discovers before long that they may be real enough in actual life, yet are inferior models, and he has recourse finally to a professional model. Mrs. Ward has not yet, we suspect, made the artist's discovery, but she is so brilliant a writer, she knows so well the world she aims to reproduce, and she is so good a pathologist in social health and disease, that one reads her novel with great pleasure. One has overheard clever people talk, he has become fairly well acquainted with a few persons who stand for a society which is full of interest, and he has even been drawn into a consideration of some very subtle movements below the surface. That ought to satisfy him, in these days when the world is turning itself inside out for readers of books; yet with the unreasonableness of one who has caught a glimpse of what art in fiction may be, he sighs for a world made anew by a great literary creator.

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## COMMENT ON NEW BOOKS.

### POETRY.

If it were only to keep up the traditions of the greater American poetry, the infrequent volumes put forth by Mr. Aldrich would do a real service, and his new poem *Judith and Holofernes* (Houghton) reminds

us that there still are fine themes nobly handled. He has taken the Apocryphal story, concerning which a careful canvass amongst intelligent people would reveal an astonishing extent of uncertainty, and has put it into a form which must revive and

help to fix the memory of it. In the place of the stern Hebraic Judith of ancient writ, he makes his heroine, with all the rigor of her final deed, very much a woman, and moves her, at the crucial moment, to such pity that she almost abandons her purpose. In keeping with this character, Mr. Aldrich's verse has a grace that equals if it does not exceed its force; and though the narrative may not be deeply stirring, it is exceedingly well told, and satisfies one with the knowledge that the art of poetic story-telling, after the best traditions of its practice, is not a lost art. — The Appledore Edition of *The Poems of Celia Thaxter* (Houghton), with an introduction by Miss Jewett, is one of the books which really add something to a library of American literature. There is nothing new to be said of Mrs. Thaxter's poems. Miss Jewett's words in the present volume speak with an intimate sympathy of the writer's spiritual growth, and the new strength that came with it into her work. The poems themselves, arranged here in the order of their production, show how closely Mrs. Thaxter's inmost life was related to the great sources of poetry. Of course no other one of these was more constantly her inspiration than the sea; and if the receding tide of opinion, whose power no man can foretell, removes all else, it is safe to predict that it will leave the Isles of Shoals and their surrounding waters with an aspect upon the New England map different from that of any other region. The poet who brings about such changes, and at the same time "leaves his native air the sweeter for his song," as Mrs. Thaxter has left hers, does his countrymen no mean service. — Human skill in the making of sonnets is not on the decline. Two books, *The Lamp of Gold*, by Florence L. Snow (Way & Williams), and *A Cycle of Sonnets*, edited by Mabel Loomis Todd (Roberts), reveal considerable deftness in the technical working of the art. Both of the sequences, however, dealing with great themes of love, faith, and death, give fresh proof that sonnets must needs be very much more than well written before they can impress themselves deeply even upon readers with a liking for skillful verse. What the absent something is it would need an essay rather than a paragraph to tell. — In poetry even more than in prose it is a pleasure to find fitness of material dress to the particular

form of verse, and *A Quiet Road*, by Lizette Woodworth Reese (Houghton), immediately appeals to the reader as far as binding, paper, and typography can, introducing a spirit which is quaint without affectation and penetrated with that fine flavor of poetry which is not to be detached in epigrammatic line, but like "the stinging odor of the sea," as Miss Reese herself sings, resides in the whole conception of each poem. Yet there is a singularly fine definiteness of picture, as in *A Street Scene*, *An English Missal*, *On a Colonial Picture*, and many another verse. Miss Reese does not lose her way in singing, and though she has a distinct taste for picturesqueness, the clearness and directness of her taste save it from the slightest suspicion of mannerism. The volume shows, if not a new note in our literature, a genuine and rare poetic beauty. — *Songs Without Answer* is the slightly enigmatical title of a thin book of verse by Irene Putnam (Putnams), but the riddle may be guessed as one reads the lines which show in how inquiring a mood the writer stands before nature and life. There is now and then a sob in the verse, but for the most part there is a delicate apprehension, as if one turned over fallen leaves and lifted twigs in one's walk, always searching for a little more revelation from the world. The verses are not always melodious, but there is much that suggests a refined and sensitive ear. — *Esther, a Young Man's Tragedy*, together with *The Love-Sonnets of Proteus*, by Wilfred Seawen Blunt. (Copeland & Day.) This volume follows Rossetti's *House of Life* in a series of English love-sonnets which its publishers have begun to issue. Its form is of the kind for which Mr. Morris and the Kelmscott Press are primarily responsible, — a form made more familiar hereabouts by the skillful decorations of Mr. B. G. Goodhue. In *Esther* the poet has a more definite story to tell than most dealers in sonnet sequences. Though *The Love-Sonnets of Proteus*, on the other hand, are often individually as fine, they do not show as clearly what lesson in suffering has taught the singer his song. With the same virtue of separate strong sonnets, *Esther* has besides a unity, structural and dramatic, which the better known poem lacks. — *Out of a Silver Flute*, by Philip Verrill Mighels. (Tait & Sons.) By some ironic

fatality Mr. Mighels has put on the first pages of his book a number of quatrains which epitomize and caricature its most unhappy features. The first words of the first quatrain are "Old Sol," which dog-eared phrase cries out with only too prophetic a voice that triteness is to come. In the same quatrain the setting sun with its reflection in water is addressed with enthusiasm as "the golden exclamation point of God." After this charming conceit we are not surprised to hear Mount Shasta described as an "awe-inspiring I" in "God's chirography," nor to learn that the jelly-fish is "love-sick Neptune's wave-lorn kiss, tide-launched to nestle in a sea-nymph's tress." Silvern as may be the tones of Mr. Mighels' flute, the mellow stop of humor is lacking there.—The Golden Shuttle, by Marion Franklin Ham. (Printed by J. J. Little & Co., New York.) A volume of verse which has more excuse for being than some that come introduced by publishers. The writer has reproduced with some dexterity the impressions made on his ear and eye by nature; he has translated a few spiritual perceptions into terms of common life, and though he appears to be still in the imitative period, he follows with some firmness of step. There is evidence of painstaking, and there is more restraint than one commonly meets.

#### BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG.

One's own grandmother or elderly mother given the right side of the leaf to nibble, and so shrinking to the stature of childhood, is one of the perennial delights of children, and Miss Eliza Orne White, in *A Little Girl of Long Ago* (Houghton), has reproduced the little figure with its comrades in a truly charming manner. Something of the pleasure one gets from the portraits of little girls painted in the early part of the century is here, and the effect is heightened by the transcript in the illustrations of actual pictures of children. Miss White's touch is so sympathetic and so firm, and she has such a lurking fun, that the narrative never seems fictitious, and yet never is biographical. The story is one to be enjoyed in common by old and young, and of how few books can this be said!—With the holidays comes the usual triple presentment of the Henty boy, and his innumerable friends will find that young

gentleman as pleasingly modest and manly as ever. Guy Aylmer, in *At Agincourt*, a Tale of the White Hoods of Paris, has, as may be surmised, abundant opportunities to display all his heroic qualities, it even being given to him to save King Henry's life in the great battle. Stanley Brooke, in *On the Irrawaddy*, a Story of the First Burmese War, and Stephen Embleton, in *With Cochrane the Dauntless*, a Tale of the Exploits of Lord Cochrane in South American Waters, are both early nineteenth-century lads. The former does good service in one of the most terrible of England's little wars in the East, and we are glad to hear that, in a green old age, he still lives "in a noble mansion near Stains." Mr. Henty usually provides most generously for the tranquil after-life of his heroes; even Stephen, who follows the brave, self-sacrificing, but hardly fortunate Cochrane, brings at least a few thousands with him to his native shore. As always, the purely historical portions of these tales are carefully and conscientiously written. (Scribners.)—The Log of a Privateersman, by Harry Collingwood (Scribners), resembles the Henty books in its outward guise, and is of the same satisfying length. It describes with much spirit the moving accidents which befell an English youth during his career as a privateersman in certain memorable months of the Napoleonic war, — months which witnessed the culmination of Nelson's glory. We need hardly say that the young hero is able to be very useful to the great admiral, — who, however, does not appear upon the scene in his own proper person, — and so gains, with honor and profit, a command in the Royal Navy.—For King or Country, by James Barnes. (Harpers.) Mr. Barnes's story makes an excellent book for boys, — improbable enough to hold their interest, yet carefully avoiding the seasoning of absurdity which so many juvenile books seem to require in order to become palatable. The chivalrous young hero fights his way stoutly through the war for independence, while his twin Dromio, fighting for conscience' sake in the British army, comes at last to realize that his duty to his country is a higher commandment than his duty toward his king. — Mr. Kirk Munroe's two holiday books have, as usual, a thrilling adventure to every chapter, not to mention casual minor excitements. Through Swamp and

Glade (Scribners) is a story of the Seminole War, — not a contest in which Americans can take pride, as the writer does not fail to make evident; while Rick Dale (Harpers) is a tale of to-day, concerning one of those boys who encounter innumerable difficulties and dangers with no better mentor than another lad of their own age, often a chance acquaintance. The Northwest Coast is the scene of the present hero's escapes and exploits.

#### HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

Chapters from a Life, by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. (Houghton.) It is no easy matter to tell the public of one's bringing up, and then of one's ventures in literature, for the whispering self is liable to be at one's ear; but Mrs. Ward has written a simple, enjoyable account of her literary life, with some pleasant memorabilia of famous friends and some forcible general reflections drawn from her experience. The book will do much to adjust the writer's relation to her books in the minds of readers. — Sir Samuel Ferguson in the Ireland of his Day, by Lady Ferguson. (Blackwood.) We imagine that Ferguson is best known to American readers as the author of *The Forging of the Anchor*, a poem which long ago found its way into all the anthologies. This, written at the age of twenty-one, was the very first production of a literary life extending over more than half a century, whose principal inspiration — and a genuine inspiration it often was — was found in purely Irish subjects. His political position — for even a poet and an antiquarian must be political in Ireland — can be briefly stated in his own words: "I sympathized with the Young Ireland poets and patriots while their aims were directed to a restoration of Grattan's Parliament. . . . But I have quite ceased to sympathize with their successors, who have converted their high aspirations to a sordid social war of classes carried on by the vilest methods." A patriot of a very noble sort, Ferguson's aspiration to be one of the founders or even precursors of a national Irish literature is a little pathetic as well as admirable to an outside observer, in view of the indifference to his theme in his own class, while the mass of the people, generally speaking, cared not at all for such literature as he would give them. He was justly a conspicuous figure

amongst all that was best in the Dublin society of his day, so his life is really in a way a record of that society. Of the fine and lovable quality of the man too much cannot be said. In the singularly attractive portrait given in the first volume, we surely find the mind's construction in the face. — *Lorenzo de' Medici, and Florence in the Fifteenth Century*, by E. Armstrong, M. A. Heros of the Nations Series. (Putnam's.) The general reader should be grateful to Mr. Armstrong for giving him a life of Lorenzo de' Medici of moderate length, which is withal a scholarly piece of work, showing throughout a careful study and comparison of both the earlier and later approved authorities. He achieves a rather unusual measure of success in his endeavors to set forth intelligibly the confusing and hardly inspiring Italian politics of the Medicean age, but his readers will probably dwell longest upon the more personal aspects of his study of the history of the founders of the great Florentine house destined to rule despotically for three centuries. Generous space is given, as it should be, to a consideration of the letters and art of the place and time, — in its literature Lorenzo himself being one of the greatest names, perhaps we should say the greatest, while to its art he was the most appreciative of patrons. The numerous illustrations are well chosen and interesting, and include many portraits. As usual, those of Lorenzo do not fail to excite a sort of indignant surprise at the superlative ugliness of a man whose name is associated with every form of beauty. — *The Life of Benvenuto Cellini*, newly translated into English by John Addington Symonds. Fourth Edition. (Imported by Scribners.) Few and far between are the translations which convey to the English reader not only the words, but, so far as may be, the very spirit of the original. Amongst these masterpieces Symonds's version of Cellini's autobiography will always hold a place. We are glad that it is now offered to our public, in its less costly form, the present edition being the one in a single handsome volume, well printed and excellently illustrated.

#### FICTION.

In *Homespun*, by Edith Nesbit. Key-notes Series. (Lane, London; Roberts, Boston.) Not one of the ten stories in this

sting; the majority of  
mer praise. They are  
gent and of the Sussex  
ld by women in humble  
at not unpleasing English,  
naturalness, simplicity, and  
an occasional genuine dra-  
Perhaps narrators of this  
hardly speak with so small a  
ords, but as brevity and direct-  
among the most attractive quali-  
ese sketches, we are not inclined  
to press the point. We wish, however, that  
Son and Heir could have been omitted.  
With its bit of conventional sensationalism,  
and the wondrously rapid and easy trans-  
formation at its close, redolent of the foot-  
lights, it is out of harmony with its com-  
panions, and unworthy of them as well. —  
"All Men are Liars," by Joseph Hocking.  
(Roberts.) A curious mixture of *naïveté*  
and cleverness, weakness and strength, ro-  
mance and realism. The hero, an ingenu-  
ous youth at the outset, comes under the  
influence of a cynical uncle, a pessimistic  
and skeptical tutor, a wife and father-in-  
law who are heartless worldlings, and so  
loses his illusions and sinks very low in-  
deed, being rescued from the depths and  
restored to faith and courage by the love  
of a true woman, whom he himself had  
aforetime saved from degradation. The  
ability shown by the author in certain di-  
rections makes the crude conventionality  
of some of his character-drawing the more  
noticeable. — *Black Spirits and White*, a  
*Book of Ghost Stories*, by Ralph Adams  
Cram. *Carnation Series*. (Stone & Kim-  
ball.) While reading the half dozen ghost-  
ly tales in this little volume, — or five,  
we should say, for one is the story of a  
maniac, — the phantoms appeared rather  
familiar acquaintances; but on reaching  
the last page, we find that the writer has  
addressed his readers in a postscript, and  
deprecates such criticism by stating his  
belief that all legends of the supernatural  
spring from the same roots, and declaring  
that if he "has succeeded in clothing one or  
two of these norms in some slightly new  
vesture he is more than content." We must  
say that we find the merely human part of  
the sketches much the better done. The  
supernatural vesture is not new, but only a  
little remodeled, while its adornments are  
quite too highly colored, and yet somehow

fail to give that thrill often obtained by  
seemingly simple means. Mr. Cram's sto-  
ries, however, can be understood by the gen-  
eral reader, which is by no means to be said  
of a tale issued in another volume of the same  
series, *The Gods give my Donkey Wings*,  
by Angus Evan Abbott. The title, apropos  
of nothing in particular, fitly heads a story  
in which a packman of some undiscoverable  
epoch visits a country called *The Thorp*, not  
to be found on any map, where various  
adventures occur, of which the reader gets  
confusing glimpses. The writer uses a  
more or less archaic English, which shares  
the indefiniteness of the time and country,  
a fair specimen of which is the transmogrified  
proverb, "Familiarity procreates villi-  
pendency." — *The Way they loved at Grim-  
pat*, by E. Rentoul Esler. (Holt.) While  
the most unwholesome, tawdry, or trivial  
"up-to-date" stories are sure to be import-  
ed with needless celerity, it has taken two  
or three years for these modest, pleasing  
village idyls to reach us. They do not  
speak dialect in *Grimpat*, and we are not  
told where in England we can find the ham-  
let, though of its reality we feel sure. The  
author refers to it as rather ugly, but ugliness  
is comparative, and it would probably  
be esteemed pretty enough elsewhere. They  
are good girls whose comedies and trage-  
dies are recorded here, and their stories are  
written with rigid simplicity, and yet always  
sympathetically, gracefully, and with the  
accent of truth. — *Artists' Wives*, by Al-  
phonse Daudet, translated by Laura Ensor.  
(Dent, London; Macmillan, New York.)  
The obvious moral pointed by the last of  
the dozen tales in the book is that, unless  
the artist is stupid, and the wife beautiful  
and clever, artists had better refrain from  
marrying. The series of pictures of men  
of the *genus irritabile* matched with clowns  
of the opposite sex is a convincing argument  
against the marriage of commonplace men  
with the commonplace women they often  
choose. Most of the stories have an ele-  
ment of pathos, and all a dash of Gallic  
humor. None is more delightful than *As-  
sault with Violence*, in which the wife, act-  
ing under legal advice to goad the husband  
into striking her, loses her own temper and  
slaps his face. — *A Stumbler in Wide Shoes*  
(Holt) forms the sixth number of the *Pro-  
tean Series*. The scene is laid alternately  
in Holland and England, and the anony-



mous author shows a pretty intimate acquaintance with some not altogether obvious phases of life in those countries. The plot, too, is surprisingly vital in places. In spite of the markedly amateurish technique of the book, and the slow development of its dramatic interest, it fulfills its purpose of entertainment. — *The Romance of Guardamonte*, by Arline E. Davis (Tait & Son), is one of those wholly unreadable books which deal with foreign life (preferably aristocratic) from a point of view nicely adjusted between that of the gushing school-girl and that of the imaginative spinster. Italy is the scene of the romance, and names dear to tourists stud the pages, but not so thickly as to distract the reader's animadversive eye from the crudeness of the style and the paltriness of the invention. — *A Venetian June*, by Anna Fuller (Putnams), narrates the pilgrimage of two American girls, under the chaperonage of a kindly old uncle, to the shrine of St. Mark's. The girls are handsome and "interesting," and punctiliously satisfy our expectations of their good sense by spending their time very pleasantly in their gondolas, in seeing the churches and pictures, and in falling in love with the likeliest of the men they happen to meet. — *Wisdom's Folly, a Study in Feminine Development*, by A. V. Dutton. (Holt.) An agreeably written tale, but we do not think that the study of the heroine's development has been equally successful at all stages of her career, and in the account of her flirtation with her husband's cousin we feel sure that the student has quite gone astray. The writer has insight and humor, and nearly all the minor characters are exceedingly well sketched. The ending of the story is satisfactory, even if it requires the too familiar railway accident and nearly fatal illness to make the wedded pair really understand each other's feelings. — *A Princess of the Gutter*, by L. T. Meade. (Putnams.) The heroine, a Girton girl, finds that a large property which she has inherited consists for the most part of wretched East End tenements. She goes to live in Shoreditch, near some of these houses, having them speedily demolished and better ones built in their place, occupying herself meanwhile with a girls' club and other helpful works. Martha Mace, the princess of the gutter, an utterly untrained young woman of much

native nobility and strength, author to have been drawn from certain sensational incidents, are clearly of the writer's own. The larger portion of the tale, however, written soberly, and has the accent of — *The Touch of Sorrow, a Study*. (Holt.) Another tale of an Undine-heroine who at last finds her soul, in this case through a great sorrow. She shrinks selfishly and even heartlessly from trouble in any form, and from all persons in distress, but at her child's grave a new life comes to her and a feeling of kinship to all who suffer. The story is simply told, is refined in tone, and is commendably free from sentimentality. — *Honor Ormthwaite*. (Harpers.) Honor, a peasant girl of the North-Country, to judge by her accent, who makes a foolish and miserable juvenile marriage, and later becomes a farm servant, is sought as a wife by Sir Gregory Ormthwaite, — not a hot-headed youth, but a gentleman of mature age, distinguished abilities, and large fortune, — and shortly after we find her the graceful and dignified mistress of his household. Of course various troublesome matters from her past return to vex her, and the writer shows considerable ingenuity in handling these untoward incidents. Novel-readers who do not mind the improbability, to speak mildly, of this scheme, or the fact that the leading characters never succeed in being quite alive, will find the story reasonably entertaining. — *The Silk of the Kine*, by L. McManus. (Harpers.) As before in *The Red Star* the writer tells of a heroine who, quite unwillingly, loves a soldier of her enemies. In this book it is of Lady Margery Ny Guire, one of the "transplanted," who is saved from various ills by an officer of Cromwell's army, who ruins his own career in doing so. The author's Puritans are not altogether convincing, but Mr. (or Miss) McManus is a good raconteur; the story is well-constructed and is told in a lively, vigorous fashion, and is the stronger for its brevity. — *Nets for the Wind*, by Una Taylor. Keynotes Series. (Lane, London; Roberts, Boston.) Presumably Miss Taylor is a Symbolist, and we greatly fear that her tales will be profitable neither for edification nor for entertainment save to the initiated. Ungentle readers may even suggest that the title of the book symbolizes the futility of its con-

tents. — James Inwick, Ploughman and Elder, by P. Hay Hunter. (Harpers.) With some force and a good deal of dry humor, James Inwick tells of his mental struggles over the question of Disestablishment, for he is at once a Liberal and an elder of the Kirk. The tale makes a bold plunge into the future, for the Kirk is disestablished, without the promised good coming to the people thereby. The whole narrative is in dialect, and a not unneeded glossary is appended. — The Messrs. Scribners have completed their attractive series of Stories by English Authors, by the publication of the last two volumes: one devoted to the Sea, with, very appropriately, a portrait of Mr. W. Clark Russell as a frontispiece; the other entitled Germany, etc., in which the locality shifts to Holland and Flanders, and even to London. — The Under-Side of Things, by Lilian Bell. (Harpers.) The glimpses of West Point and army life which this story gives us, together with the real if somewhat obvious pathos of its closing episode, make only partial amends for its technical shortcomings. The inchoateness of portions of the story and the occasional glaring solecisms make us long for the time when young writers shall feel it as incumbent upon them to learn the technique of their trade as do young painters or young musicians. — The Quicksands of Pactolus, by Horace Annesley Vachell. (Holt.) A Californian story which aims to illustrate some of the effects of rapid accumulation of wealth in a new community. The author is, unfortunately, so occupied with the "social problems" which his theme presents that he does not give himself quite whole-heartedly to his drama, but in spite of this the book has "the quality of art," and leaves an impression of considerable skill and strength. — Some Correspondence and Six Conversations, by Clyde Fitch. (Stone & Kimball.) *Tiny jeux d'esprit*, entertaining enough, perhaps, to silence our repudiation of the claim of such drawing-room toys to the responsible title of literature. — The Governor's Garden, a Relation of Some Passages in the Life of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, sometime Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of His Majesty's Province of Massachusetts Bay, by George R. R. Rivers. (Joseph Knight Co.) Governor Hutchinson's garden was, and apparently still is, in Milton,

where the unfortunate gentleman delighted in a beautiful place. Most of the many adventures in the tale take place far outside the garden, as the lover of the heroine has the mischance to be spirited away to the Caribbean Sea, and the marvelous good luck to find his lady-love in England, where he marries her and enters upon a deservedly happy life. The story is of somewhat meagre interest, except for its picturesque background. This is beautified by the book-maker's best skill, for an eighteenth-century story printed so near the end of our age has never been made to look more completely as if its types and decorations had been put together by a man of its own time. — A Mountain Woman, by Elia W. Peattie. (Way & Williams.) The title-story of this collection of far-Western tales, by no means should be the first one read, for it is really the least successful sketch in the book. The woman, who is not (says her husband) of the puny breed of modern femininity, but a remnant left over from the heroic ages, proves far less interesting than the everyday folk to be found elsewhere in the volume. Frontier life is nowadays certainly not an unused subject, but there is individuality in Mrs. Peattie's treatment of it; she has sympathetic insight and genuine feeling, and almost always a wise self-restraint. At her best, as in Jim Lancy's Waterloo, a dreary, hopeless, and, alas, common tragedy of Nebraska farm-life, she tells a story forcibly and effectively. — Will o' the Wasp, a Sea Yarn of the War of '12, edited by Henry Lawrence, U. S. N., and now brought before the public for the first time. By Robert Cameron Rogers. (Putnams.) The Autocrat speaks of a sweet delusion of his childhood, hardly relinquished when childhood had passed, which always brought the thought, when cannon sounded from the Navy Yard, "The Wasp has come." Why it never came this yarn graphically tells, and commemorates the corvette's earlier triumphs as well. It is an old sailor's tale of his youth, on the whole exceedingly well done, being vigorous, spirited, and lifelike. — Persis Yorke, by Sydney Christian. (Macmillan.) A provokingly unequal book. The heroine is drawn with grace and skill, as are all the lesser women in the story, and many of her trials, which are of peculiar severity and follow one another with startling rapidity, are truthfully and

effectively treated. But the pathetic realism of the story is marred by the occasional introduction of commonplace sensationalism, while the very good hero and his father and the very bad father of the heroine have not, for all their vivacity and garrulousness, a particle of real life. In the beginning the tale is natural and moving, in the end, crude and artificial. The writer should be capable of better things. — *Day-Books*, by Mabel E. Wotton. Keynotes Series. (Lane, London; Roberts, Boston.) It is a pity that one who can write so well and is so good a story-teller should be, for the most part, so unfortunate in her choice of subjects; the more so as the reader instinctively feels that this choice is not from natural inclination, but merely a yielding to a passing bad fashion. — Another volume of short stories, above the ordinary, in the same series, is *Where the Atlantic Meets the Land*, by Caldwell Lipsett. They are Donegal sketches, racy of the soil, by turns tragic and comic, the tragedy lying very near the comedy in the passionate, undisciplined, childish natures of the dwellers in this remote corner of Ireland. Of the truthfulness of these rapid but vivid and vigorous sketches the reader is at once persuaded. — *The Story of Ulla*, by Edwin Lester Arnold. (Longmans.) Ten short tales; the first, that gives the book its title, being the best. The aged priest's story of his fierce pagan youth is forcibly and graphically told, the young viking having a greater measure of vitality than is commonly found in the primitive man of latter-day fiction. Three or four other sketches, more or less akin to the first, in that they treat of untamed men and nature in her wilder moods, show a certain power. For the rest the brief life of the ordinary magazine story should have sufficed. — One of the *Visconti*, by Eva Wilder Brodhead. Ivory Series. (Scribners.) One of the multitude of temporarily widowed American women, who for the children's education or their own pleasure make long sojourns in Europe, serves as the heroine of this little tale, the *dramatis personæ* being Kentuckians mostly, with a sprinkling of Neapolitans. Naturally, the author is better acquainted with the former, in dealing with whom, in one or two instances, she shows clever touches of character-drawing. But the story is commonplace, though far from unreadable.

— *Out of Bounds, Being the Adventures of an Unadventurous Young Man*, by A. Garry. (Holt.) A lively narrative of the very boyish and quite harmless escapades of a well-brought-up, decorous youth, the hope of a family of provincial magnates. 'T is but a two days' tale, yet that is found long enough for the rise, progress, and culmination of the love affair intertwined with the hero's other adventures. In manner and movement the story is not unlike the farcical comedy of the contemporaneous English drama, somewhat rationalized in being turned into a novelette.

#### LITERATURE.

The uniform edition of Mrs. Stowe's writings has been represented thus far by half a dozen volumes, including *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Minister's Wooing*. The whole set will comprise sixteen volumes, and the opportunity has been taken to classify the briefer pieces and bring them into proper relation to the whole body of Mrs. Stowe's work, and to furnish each volume with a history of its contents. The series will show the range of this author's gift, and the marked personality which is disclosed through all the varied manifestation. Mrs. Stowe was a great figure, and it is every way proper that the product of her genius and her industry should thus be brought into a good survey. There are certain material helps to the standing of literature which should not be neglected, and scarcely any is more effective than uniform and collective editions. (Houghton.) — *Talks about Autographs*, by George Birkbeck Hill. (Houghton.) The contents of this handsome book have already appeared in *The Atlantic*, so far as the text is concerned, but the separate publication permits a wealth of facsimiles of autographs and reproductions of portraits which add much to the enjoyment. The title is made good by this means, and how admirably Dr. Birkbeck Hill's familiar colloquy dignifies the collector's occupation! These letters and portraits are but the suggestive notes to a rich rehabilitation of men and women, scenes and incidents. The humor which plays about the whole is just that agreeable *sauce piquante* which makes table-talk about literature far removed from petty personal gossip. — *Vergil in the Middle Ages*, by Domenico Comparetti. Translated by



E. F. M. Benecke, with an Introduction by Robinson Ellis, M. A. (Sonnenschein, London; Macmillan, New York.) Professor Comparetti's great book, which for years has been the standard authority on the subject of which it treats, has at last appeared in English, and in a translation so good that it should be gratefully welcomed by those English and American readers — many it is to be hoped — who through it make their first acquaintance with the work. The translation is from the proof-sheets of the second edition, from which it appears that the writer has in no essential particular modified his opinion as to the growth of the mediæval Vergilian legends, still holding them to be popular rather than literary in their origin. Of the wide and profound scholarship and the immense research which have gone to the making of the work there is hardly need to speak at this late day, nor can there remain any doubt as to its permanent value. To all lovers of the poet, whose works never became a closed book even in the darkest of the dark ages, this study of the Vergil of literary tradition and popular legend, from the Roman Decadence till the Renaissance, is to be commended. That the volume has no index is a grievous shortcoming. — The students of English literature owe a debt to Mr. Lewis E. Gates not only for making a varied and sprightly choice in Selections from the Prose Writing of Cardinal Newman (Holt), and so giving a convenient opportunity for tasting the richness in that field, but for his well-ordered and stimulating introduction, as thoughtful and exegetical a presentation of Newman's English as we remember to have seen. This introduction is a study, sixty pages long, which treats of Newman almost wholly in his literary aspect, but in its final section gives a most rational account of the cardinal's relation to his own times.

#### PHILOSOPHY.

To those who are acquainting themselves with Friedrich Nietzsche through the Macmillan edition of his collected works, the second volume, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, will come as a potent surprise, if not as a revelation. With an instinct which proves his greatness as an artist, whatever may be his ultimate status as a thinker, Nietzsche has found here a form wonderfully fitted to

the peculiar idiom of his mind. A philosophical romance, the action of which lies outside time, and the characters of which are pure symbols, serves as a slender arabesque about the sayings of Zarathustra, the hermit preacher of the doctrine of "Beyond-man." These sayings are in the form of short canticles, by turns fervid, sardonic, mystical, and savage, full of exaltation strangely smitten across by saturnine laughter, and of broad humor as strangely irradiated by bursts of the most subtle and poignant lyricism. The doctrine thus extraordinarily conveyed is the one which Nietzsche everywhere preaches, that man is "something to be surpassed," and that in order to reach Beyond-man the human race must become "at once better and more wicked." The direct philosophical significance of this doctrine lies, of course, in the fact that it carries over into human and superhuman domains the crude principle of evolution, untempered by the working of the social and philanthropic instincts. This particular wording of the doctrine will doubtless survive less by reason of the naked intellectual concepts it involves than by reason of the astonishing artistic form that has been imposed upon them. The strength and finish of the short detached canticles, contrasted with the inchoateness of the larger masses in the earlier volume, tempt us to apply to Nietzsche his own famous dictum concerning Wagner: that instead of being a Titanic builder he is in reality only the most consummate of miniaturists. The translator, Dr. Alexander Tille, of the University of Glasgow, has performed his difficult task with brilliant success. His renderings are often daring to the point of temerity, but never escape the control of a trained and sensitive taste. — *Human Progress, What Can Man do to Further It?* by Thomas F. Blair. (William R. Jenkins.) This work is the latest attempt of that class of thinkers who, having grown tired of the long-continued self-effacement in minute investigations, are turning toward a reconstruction of our revised knowledge in some new philosophy which they call the Science of Progress. Mr. Blair makes much of practicality. He concerns himself with theory only so far as it enables him to reach a system of principles from which he derives his millennial prescriptions for our diseased body and soul.

## RELIGION.

Church Unity, Five Lectures delivered in the Union Theological Seminary, New York, during the Winter of 1896. (Scribners.) The lecturers represented five important Protestant bodies: Dr. Shields speaking for the Presbyterian church, President Andrews for the Baptist, Bishop Hurst for the Methodist, Bishop Potter for the Episcopal, and Dr. Bradford for the Congregational. What such men as these have to say on the subject assigned them is worth hearing. It is worth observing, too, that they reveal an unmistakable common inclination to unite upon some such basis as that of the famous Chicago-Lambeth proposals. There is wisdom in the contention made more than once that Christian Unity must precede Church Unity, that the form of things cannot be made homogeneous till the spirit is at one. Distant as the day of unification may be, it is by such means as this book that it is brought nearer. Without irreverence, by the way, but with something like amusement, the reader who bears recent political events in mind must notice that the title of

the lecture by President Andrews is *The Sin of Schism*.

## NATURE.

Familiar Trees and their Leaves, described and illustrated by F. Schuyler Mathews, with over two hundred Drawings by the Author, and an Introduction by Professor L. H. Bailey of Cornell University. (Appletons.) That the present growing interest in the more poetic and æsthetic branches of natural science is something more than a mere fad is shown by the excellent books it calls out. One of the latest of these is this hand-book from a man who is in love with his subject, and who sees in the scarlet oak as well as in the "yellow primrose" much that ordinary eyes miss. It will admirably serve its purpose of showing unscientific but interested observers how to know the trees by their leaves, bark, etc., without depending too much on the presence of flower or fruit. Mr. Mathews has a good eye for color, as his descriptions constantly show. That his feeling for grace and form is equally delicate a glance at the illustrations will reveal.

## THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB.

*The American Voice.* In a railroad station, the other day, I saw an uncouth foreigner, evidently a Jew, who had just arrived from the old country, and had been met at the station by two men of his own kind. These two had upon them, however, the imprint of American civilization, in such form as it has penetrated Salem Street. They greeted the new-comer in voices which had no unusual quality; but he returned their salutations in a baritone so full, so strong, so melodious that the music of it echoes still in the caves that lie somewhere between my tympanum and my heart, — those sub-carnal and enchanted caverns where sense-impressions wander while they await their transformation into thoughts and ideas. The voice had a tone as hard to describe as the quality in a wood-thrush's song; it was a mellow sweetness, a rounded fullness that thrilled the sense and delighted the soul. But the man was an ordinary Russian Jew in appearance; he was mani-

festly not in the slightest degree in harmony with the genius of our institutions. Alas! why should he have such a voice, while the next American gentleman I met spoke through his nose?

Leaving the station, I pursued my way down town through the Common and past the great sunken Way which is being dug there. I saw a young Irishman sauntering along, all begrimed with yellow earth, with similarly begrimed fellows, from one part of the work to another; and he was speaking to the other men about some detail of their toil. I knew he was newly arrived in the country, because the dew had not yet dried off the bloom of his brogue; it had the melodious quality which is soon lost from the American Irishman's talk. He was a tall, slender fellow, with a short, curling fair beard, and blue eyes. *His* voice was a tenor, and as clear as a linnet's. He seemed to sing rather than to speak, but he was just talking to the other laborers about the work.