

szewska, who was a poetess of taste and culture, he inherited a taste for literature. He wrote a series of critical articles in 1869, in his twenty-fifth year, but they attracted no attention. The next year he tried a novel, but that met a fate strangely appropriate to its title—'In Vain.' No one credited him with talent, and he lost heart. In the year of our Centennial he came to this country and joined Madame Modjeska's famous colony of expatriated Poles in California. Then came his sketches of travel in America. 'I know the great West of America as a traveler only,' he said. Here I fancied I could detect the faintest apologetic touch to the voice. Perhaps the novelist has had an inkling of the sensitiveness of Americans to the opinions of distinguished foreigners, like Dickens and himself, who have seemed hasty in their generalizations of America 'as seen from a car window.' Mr. Sienkiewicz's reference to pigs in the streets of New York somehow lingers unpleasantly in the memory."

Many of the characters in the famous Trilogy were actual historic verities. But some of the most fascinating figures of the romances, the novelist declares, especially Zagloba and Podbipienta, were types of people or classes. Mr. Van Norman questioned him on this point, and the following conversation took place:

"'Aside from the historical characters in the Trilogy, you have given us a number of types, have you not?' I asked. 'If Skshetuski, Hmelnitski, Vishnyevetski, Kmita, and Radziwill were actual figures of history, what of Zagloba, of Podbipienta, of Volodiyovski?'

"'Michael Volodiyovski was an actual character. There was a knight of that name, known far and wide as "the best soldier of the Commonwealth." The manner of his death, including the dramatic visit of Sobieski at his funeral, are historic verities. The siege of the stronghold of Kamenetz in Podolia happened just as I have pictured it.'

"'And Zagloba?'

"'Zagloba is a type, particularly common at the time of which I have written, altho I know many Zaglobas to-day in Lithuania, and even here in Galicia.'

"'Boastful yet brave, crafty in council, sharp and witty of tongue, drinking by the bucket rather than by the glass, with an appetite like that of the boars of his native forests, cheerful in the face of adverse fortune, with a humor and kindness quite unique, the old noble has no analog in any literature, with perhaps the exception of Shakespeare's Falstaff. I suggested the similarity to Mr. Sienkiewicz.

"'If I may be permitted to make a comparison,' he said, 'I think that Zagloba is a better character than Falstaff. At heart the old noble was a good fellow. He would fight bravely when it became necessary, whereas Shakespeare makes Falstaff a coward and a poltroon.'

"'A happier comparison, perhaps, is that of a German critic, who calls Zagloba a second Ulysses. Indeed, the old noble gloried in the resemblance he bore to the wily Greek. In stratagems and deceptions, in outwitting or placating the enemy, in making foes love each other by false yet plausible honeyed speeches, for withering sarcasm, Zagloba is certainly to be compared with Homer's *vir incomparabilis*—having the advantage of kindness and humor, which the Greek did not have.

"'And what of simple, chivalrous Podbipienta, the long Lithuanian knight?'

"'Podbipienta is a fantasy, but a true type. In him we see Lithuania.'

"'To those who know the Lithuanian type, the fidelity of the artist in depicting Podbipienta is wonderful. Large of limb and heart, simple but strong of mind, taciturn, even moody at times, generous, patient, relentless when his mind was once made up (waiting years to fulfil his vow to cut off the three Turkish heads)—Pan Longin is Lithuania personified."

Of the Trilogy as literature, Mr. Van Norman quotes an English critic who has characterized Sienkiewicz as "Scott and Dumas rolled into one, with the added humor of Cervantes, and at times the strength of Shakespeare," and adds:

"'With the tragic, tense, bloody history of his country as a cyclopean background, he has swept with bold, beautiful lines, and his brush has limned a marvelous picture. Battle, adven-

ture, heroism, virile conflict, are the strokes that stand out, but the eurythmy that dominates the entire picture, the light that suffuses the canvas, is that of love. Sienkiewicz knows, with an exquisite knowledge which finds at once the vital point of every situation, that love is and should be the mainspring, the soul, of the novel. He is not afraid of his theme. His characters are not 'goody-goodies.' They are far from being carpet-knights or shepherdesses of Arcady. Occasionally, for one shuddering second, we get a glimpse of the most brutal depths in his men. They are always strong and virile. He never shrinks from physical love, but when he touches it he does so incidentally, lightly, and then passes. The imagination is never soiled by his scenes or characters. His conception of love is always high, noble, and pure."

In conclusion Mr. Van Norman says:

"The novels of Henryk Sienkiewicz have been translated into almost every civilized tongue. Sixteen of his books are now (1900) in English, thirty-nine in Russian, fifteen in German, fourteen in Bohemian, nine in Italian, eight in French, three in Swedish, one in Spanish, one in Portuguese, one in Greek, two in Armenian, and some of the shorter stories in other less important tongues. In Russia he is read more than any other author—not excepting Tolstoy. Russians know Polish history, and, moreover, in the romances the two peoples are never at enmity. Was this a clever diplomatic stroke of the novelist, or was it merely a coincidence?"

AMERICAN ART AWARDS AT THE PAN-AMERICAN.

IN the Hall of Fine Arts at Buffalo about 800 paintings by American artists are on exhibition. The committee on awards has granted about 180 prizes for paintings, and for the entire exhibit of paintings, engravings, sculpture, and drawings, 277 prizes have been granted. The committee justifies this large number of awards as follows:

"The jury of awards for the division of fine arts has to report that the exhibition of fine arts in the present exposition is the most complete and representative exhibition of American art ever yet got together. Almost all the works collected were solicited for the exhibition by the director of fine arts, and no unsolicited work was accepted without the approval of an expert professional jury, so that the mere presence of a work of art in this collection is of itself a certificate of merit. Under these circumstances it has seemed necessary to the jury to make a very large number of recommendations or awards, in order to do even partial justice to the work exhibited."

This explanation does not, however, avert criticism. The *Hartford Times*, while admitting that the awards are fairly made, if it be conceded that so many of them had to be given, says:

"It is hardly possible to doubt that the cause of art would have been advanced by giving one medal where a dozen have been given. In that case there would have been honor in the award; at present it is rather that those who got nothing are more aggrieved than if only a few had been chosen for distinction; those who have awards feel that there is no great merit in being put in a large class to which most of them feel they are already known to belong, and the few who might naturally have hoped to find their names in a much smaller list wish they might have had the opportunity to contest under such terms. Commercially the plan followed may be a good one. It advertises the exhibition and it advertises a large number of artists, but from the other point of view the plan leaves much to be desired."

The New York *Evening Post* comments to the same effect:

"It is to be feared that many of the artists thus honored will hold the distinction cheap. Many will feel that if the average of our painting is really so high, the better plan would be, in recognition of so gratifying a consummation, to place all exhibitors from the United States *hors concours*, and reserve mere medals and mentions for the less advanced nations. To give everybody medals and mention seems to show an undue distrust of the in-

ward grace, and an exaggerated solicitude for the outward sign. While we most of us are brave enough to bear whatever distinction is thrust upon us, certainly a good score of competent painters must rub their eyes to find themselves in the gold-medal class with John La Farge, Winslow Homer, Whistler, and Sargeant; and certainly if twenty-six Grands Prix were enough for the world at the Paris Exposition, thirty-three gold medals are too many for all America."

A special diploma and medal of honor were unanimously recommended by the committee for Mr. Augustus St. Gaudens, the sculptor, in view of the "extraordinary and altogether exceptional merit" of his work. "To this," says the *Hartford Times*, "no one, we think, objects, not even the other sculptors in the competition"; and *The Evening Post* thinks that this part of the decision "will be applauded by all who know the high seriousness and exquisite artistry of his work."

AN ARRAIGNMENT OF ENGLISH PERIODICALS.

MR. W. S. HARWOOD, an American newspaper writer, has been wandering among the bookstalls of London, examining the wares thereon displayed, and he reaches a pessimistic opinion of the English periodical. In the *New York Times Saturday Review* he writes:

"Outside of some of the larger railway station-stalls, I did not find a place where any special interest was shown in English or Scotch periodicals of high merit. Indeed, but seldom did I find a stall offering for sale a single representative review, while many seemed to have but slight demand for the few high-grade magazines of London.

"In most cases the proprietor would say that the better class of publications were not on sale because largely they were taken by subscription, by the year; but when pressed to know why there was not a liberal month-to-month sale of such publications, as is the case in similar publications in the United States, he would reply, sometimes testily, sometimes half angrily, sometimes shamefacedly, that, if the truth must be told, the high-class publications were for the slender circle of the few—the millions cared nothing for them."

As a class of paintings sold to a nation, continues the writer, establishes that nation's standard of art, so the literature most widely sold establishes the general literary standards of taste. Studying the English periodicals, Mr. Harwood found first, as to exteriors, that they "were printed upon paper of the flimsiest quality, hardly up to that in use in a backwoods newspaper office. The presswork was execrable, even more noticeably poor." He adds:

"The illustrations, an important feature of a magazine in these days, were, for the most part, not only mournfully amateurish, but inartistically amateurish. In drawing, in illumination of the text, in reproduction, they were alike miserable. I can see some occasion for this in the statement of a very well-known art editor of London, connected with one of the better publications. He told me one day in conversation of the surprise expressed by a young American artist on learning that the editor would not pay one-third as much for some illustrations under consideration between them as the artist would have received for the same pictures at the hands of any editor of a publication in the United States of corresponding prominence."

The second and most important point noticed by Mr. Harwood was the character of the contents:

"Should one start out with the assumption that the mind of the English masses, of the London masses in particular, is incapable of maintaining any coherent train of thought, characterization of the contents of these periodicals would be idle; but if one holds that this mind is still capable of excellent mental processes, then the situation deserves attention. Take up any one of these widely circulated publications, representative of the mental food of the London millions. It has many curious features. One of

them is the recital of abnormal events, not in attractive literary form; rather in a bald and humdrum style, an ugly recital of freakish happenings, the more grotesque or horrible the better. Other of the articles, dealing with historical or scientific subjects, show their sad indenture to the cyclopedias. Again, there appears the evidence of a positive craze, pictorially as well as in the text, for the eccentric and uncanny, suggesting how important a part the two-headed calf plays in current English literature. There is also a hodge-podge of personalities concerning actors, actresses, and politicians, with now and then mention of a statesman; a sickening, uninterrupted flow of adulatory comment on the inconsequential movements of royalty, together with a more or less silly attack on British or continental foibles through the medium of a rather flaccid satire."

In conclusion, Mr. Harwood writes:

"That which the United States has in abundance, England has in leanness. While in the United States many strong, clean, enriching magazines are on the stalls month by month and week by week, not only exposed for sale in the large cities, but in every wayside town as well, supplemented by the enormous output of the regular subscription lists, in England the literary food offered to the millions is either froth or scum or an unvitalized mixture of both."

CLASSICISM DISCARDED IN RUSSIAN EDUCATION.

"REFORM" is now the watchword in educational life in Russia. The student riots, it will be remembered, produced a determination in governmental circles to reorganize secondary and higher education, the Czar himself instructing the new minister of that department, Vannovski, to apply radical remedies to the evils the disorders had disclosed.

University reform is still under preliminary and general discussion, but in secondary education a great step has already been taken. A special commission, appointed by the minister to suggest improvements in the curricula and methods of gymnasia and the "real" schools, with the view of adapting them to modern needs and modern ideas, has concluded its labors and submitted a report which the liberals hail with keen delight as a realization of their long-desired reform.

Briefly stated, the commission advocates the abolition of the distinction between the gymnasium and the real school by banishing the classical languages from the former, where they have been obligatory and even predominant. Without the classical languages no one could enter a university. The conservatives have set great store by this feature of gymnasia, in which science, modern literature, and living languages were almost wholly neglected. Hereafter, Greek is to be eliminated and Latin made an optional study, not required as a prerequisite to most of the "faculties" of the university.

This reform, already accepted, is to go into effect in 1903, and preparations for the new condition of things are to be begun at once. The press is laden with animated comment on the importance and effects of the measure. The *St. Petersburg Novosti* says:

"To make the classical languages optional is to eliminate them, for in Russia no one, even in the universities, studies that which he is not obliged to study. And so we are to say 'Vale!' to what, for thirty years, has been the very essence of our educational system.

"The time will probably come when Western Europe will bid farewell to the classical tongues. But then the parting will be different from that with us; there it will be like the separation from an old mentor to whom one is deeply grateful, but who has become superannuated and must make room for a younger teacher, one equipped with more modern knowledge and able to arm the new generations therewith. If we say good-by to classicism without regret, the fault is with the mentor, not with the pupils. To us this mentor has been a gloomy pedant who had nothing