

involutions of his own speech. He will certainly miss the delightfully simple and forcible language to which he is accustomed in his daily walk of life.

The last hundred pages of the book treat of steeple chasing. The authors of these chapters, Messrs. Coventry and Watson, have given a simple and tolerably direct narrative account of this interesting form of racing. It is to be regretted that the whole book is not their work.

The Bridle Bits: A Treatise on Practical Horsemanship by Col.-J. C. Battersby, late of the First New York (Lincoln) Cavalry, etc. O. Judd & Co. 1886.

DESPITE a bad literary style and a fancy for "splurge" in writing which is indicated even in the title-page, the author of this treatise has given us a really useful and readable book. He is evidently a skilled horseman, for, unlike many of the recent writers on the art, he has discerned the fact that the bit is the most important part of the horse's gear, and that its proper construction and management are the most difficult points which the rider has to study. The bit is not the only, nor should it be the chief means of conveying to the horse the knowledge of the master's will: that task should in the main be done by the voice, or, in the ridden animal, by the movement of the rider's body; yet it is by the bit that we secure the control of the creature in moments of excitement, and convey to him our meaning in the speediest way.

To do its work effectively the bit needs to be a rather cruel instrument; it is applied to an extremely sensitive part of the horse's body, and acts in a way that makes it easy, on a well-constituted horse, to inflict great pain. There can be no doubt that as commonly used it is more an instrument of torture than either whip or spur. The author of this little book sees these points clearly, and gives the reader information which will help him to be merciful as well as skilful in the selection and use of bits. If novices in horsemanship would heed his recommendation of the double or "Bridoon-Bit," they would escape a certain class of accidents arising from the breaking of the single-bitted bridle.

It seems to be the peculiar privilege of writers on matters concerning the horse to make wide digressions from their direct way. Col. Battersby's wanderings are numerous, but generally amusing enough to compensate the reader for the lengthened journey.

Simon de Montfort, Comte de Leicester: Sa vie (1207-1265), son rôle politique en France et en Angleterre. Par Charles Bémont. Paris: Alphonse Picard. 8vo, pp. 387.

THE excellent lives of Simon de Montfort by Pauli and Prothero have, after all, only prepared the way for a complete study of the career of this the most eminent of the English statesmen of the Middle Ages. The work has now been taken up by a French scholar, who, building upon the foundation laid by his German and English predecessors, has made an exhaustive study of the authorities, and presented a view which is not perhaps final, but which must be accepted as the ripe conclusions of conscientious labors, in the light of all attainable information.

M. Bémont has not merely given his readers the fruits of his laborious researches, but has placed in their hands the means of forming their own opinions by numerous references and citations on nearly every page; and by an appendix of 118 pages, containing *pièces justificatives*. And in order to make his account of De Montfort's statesmanship more intelligible, he has entered at great length into a description of the social and political institutions of England in the

thirteenth century, which will be found one of the most valuable parts of the work. These pages are no doubt designed especially for his French readers, as there is no period at which the institutions of France present any near analogy to those of England at this time, and French readers need, therefore, to have a great deal explained to them which we of English blood can take for granted. Nevertheless, even we can derive much instruction from these chapters. There are few, even careful students of the history of the English Constitution, who can form a clear and independent notion of its condition at any one epoch; and the sketch here given is the clearest and most graphic picture of society and government in the thirteenth century that we have ever seen. Not that it contains, perhaps, anything that one may not find in Stubbs's 'Constitutional History'; but there is a power of grouping and of presentation, and a genuine French lucidity, which places this treatment even above that of Bishop Stubbs in these respects. In this respect chapter iv, which treats of the political constitution, is better than chapter iii, which describes the social condition of England. Probably the defect is in the state of our knowledge on the subject; but in the description of feudal society in chapter iii we find it hard to obtain a clear notion of the relation of the parts to one another and to the whole, such as chapter iv gives us in admirable perfection for the political institutions.

M. Bémont is even less disposed than Mr. Prothero to exaggerate the share of Simon de Montfort in the development of the English Constitution. His language upon this subject (p. 230) deserves to be carefully studied. The representation of the burgher class in the famous Parliament of 1265 was not, he says,

"borrowed from abroad by Simon de Montfort. He did not transfer to England the customs of Aragon [Pauli's hypothesis], nor of Sicily [Milman's], nor even those of Gascony [Webster's]. Neither was it an invention of his genius. As we have already seen, in 1213 the representatives of the middle classes (*roturiers*) of the cities, in 1254 and 1264 those of the nobles of the counties, had been especially summoned before the King, in the same forms in which they were regularly summoned to the courts of the hundreds, the monthly courts of the sheriff, or the assizes held by the itinerant justices. They came to exercise, in the presence of the sovereign, functions analogous to those which they exercised in the county in the presence of the sheriff. It was, as it were, a national grand jury of inquest which was thus organized under the most solemn circumstances."

So far, if we understand rightly, his view is precisely that of Bishop Stubbs, but expressed with superior breadth and clearness. He continues:

"The complete Parliament of 1265 is not, therefore, a creation. Neither is it a regular institution which Simon de Montfort planned to establish. The treaty between the King and the barons, which the Parliament has just ratified with unaccustomed ceremony, puts in operation the oligarchical constitution of 1264, which has as a basis the aristocratic constitution of 1258. It has no other bearing. After the 14th February the representatives of the commons return home, and there they will stay. They will not complain at being dismissed to that local life in which all their interests are centred, and where, from time immemorial, they are accustomed to administer their own affairs, because these assemblies brought them more burdens than advantages. Simon has so little thought of making the commons a regular element of Parliament, the assembly of 1265 is so completely, in his eyes, an extraordinary meeting, that in the month of June following, when he convokes the Parliament to an ordinary session, we hear nothing more said of the representatives of the commons: the greater barons and the prelates alone take part in it. In order that the commons may take a regular place in Parliament, it is necessary that royalty should find its advantage in it, that it should feel the necessity of associating the nation in a regular manner with the efforts of its foreign and domestic policy. This is what took place under Edward I., at the very moment when the French

monarchy, under Philip the Fair, underwent also this fruitful transformation."

We have given this passage at length, because it seems on the whole to exhibit most correctly the meaning and historical importance of this event. But we are inclined to think that, if most writers exaggerate this importance, M. Bémont somewhat underrates it. It is true that the representation of the commons did not now become a regular institution, and was perhaps not intended as such by De Montfort himself. This consideration helps us to understand what has been so puzzling in the ordinary view—the gap of thirty years after De Montfort's Parliament before the complete representation of the cities and boroughs reappears. But none the less it appears to us a "creation," or at least a creative idea, which entitles Simon de Montfort to a place among the founders of constitutions. The imperfect and probably forgotten precedent of 1213 may or may not have given him a hint; but to take a lesson from such a precedent, and summon a representation of the entire people of England, of every class, in what was really the establishment of an organic law, was an act of true statesmanlike genius. For the fact, which is pointed out, that the Parliament of 1265 was not an ordinary Parliament, but an extraordinary assembly, convoked for a special purpose, in reality enhances the importance of the act. We in America can compare it with one of our most original institutions, the Constitutional Convention. The Constitution of England, as remodelled by the discussions and negotiations of 1264, was to be accepted and confirmed; and in this acceptance and confirmation the whole nation was called together to give its consent.

The analogy pointed out with the French States-General, interesting and correct up to a certain point, is nevertheless misleading. Simon de Montfort's Parliament and that of Edward I. were—as is very well shown in this extract—built upon vigorous institutions of local self-government; in this respect, as in so many others, the national institutions of England were, to use Bishop Stubbs' felicitous expression, the "concentration" of local institutions. It was this that gave the English Parliament its life and its substantial power. But the States-General of France had no root, and they withered away. Both assemblies began at the same epoch, with essentially the same powers—hardly more in either country than that of granting supplies. Out of this the English Parliament developed its present imperial authority, while the French legislature, after some abortive efforts in the same direction, failed at last to maintain even its hold upon the purse-strings.

There is a good index and a tolerably good table of contents; but the book would be much improved by running titles and marginal index. On page 41 we find Alexander IV. of Scotland for Alexander III.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

- A Race for Life and Other Stories. Cassell & Co. 15 cents.
 Cars, Duc des. *Mémoires de la Duchesse de Tourzel*. 2 vols. Scribner & Welford.
 Dumas, A. *Les Demoiselles de St. Cyr: A Comedy*. Edited by Victor Oger. Macmillan & Co. 40 cents.
 Edwards, H. S. *The Case of Reuben Malachi*. Rand, McNally & Co. 25 cents.
 Garlanda, F. *The Philosophy of Words*. A. Lovell & Co. \$1.50.
 Ginn, E. *Plutarch's Lives*. Classics for Children Series. Boston: Ginn & Co.
 Hellprin, L. *The Historical Reference Book*. 2d ed. D. Appleton & Co. \$3.
 Lee, Katherine. *Katherine Blythe: A Novel*. Harper & Bros. 25 cents.
 Letters from Donegal in 1886. By a Lady "Felon." Edited by Col. Maurice. Macmillan & Co. 40 cents.
 Mason, L. W. *New Second Music Reader*. Boston: Ginn & Co. 48 cents.
 McClelland, Miss M. G. *Oblivion: A Novel*. Leisure Season Series, No. 1. Henry Holt & Co. 50 cents.
 My Night Adventure and Other Stories. Cassell & Co. 15 cents.
 Palgrave, F. T. *The Golden Treasury of the Best Songs and Lyrical Poems in the English Language*. Macmillan & Co. 50 cents.
 Peyrebrune, Mme. G. de. *Une décadente*. Paris: Frin-zine; Boston: Schoenhof.