

which Dante himself might have been proud," etc.

Such guides scarcely point out the true objects for admiration in Mrs. Browning's writings; and it would require remarkable intelligence to derive from this book an accurate impression of her sensitive and high-strung nature—on one side ignorant, narrow, self-willed, and intellectually obstinate; on the other full of accomplishment, sweetness, and generous humanity. The best things in the volume are the accounts of "Flush," Mrs. Browning's spaniel; and those are not very good.

*Tales of the Birds.* By W. Warde Fowler.

With illustrations by Bryan Hook. Macmillan & Co. 1888. 8vo, pp. 209.

THIS book is handsomely printed on heavy paper, in large type, with wide margins, and several examples of an artist's mannerism. The reading-matter is less laudable, and we should doubt that it would engage an adult mind, other than a reviewer's. The author seems to us either to have tried to write a book, or to have taken a contract to that end. The birds are made to try to tell tales like persons, but seem to labor under the author's own disability, and it would have been better to leave them wagging their tails to suit themselves. Altogether, we fancy that the publishers' declaration, "The right of translation and reproduction is reserved," must be taken humorously. It is the best thing in the book.

#### BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

Bailey, J. B. *Modern Methuselahs*. London: Chapman & Hall.

Besant, W. *The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies*. Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.

Better Times: *Stories*, by the Author of "The Story of Margaret Kent." Boston: Ticknor & Co. \$1.50.

Blavatsky, H. P. *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*. Vol. I. Cosmogonies. William Q. Judge. \$5.

Burnett, Mrs. Frances Hodgson. *Kathleen: A Novel*. Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson & Bros. 25 cents.

*Century Magazine*. May, 1888, to October, 1888. The Century Co.

Channing, Rev. W. E. *The Perfect Life, in Twelve Discourses*. Scribner & Welford.

Chaucer. *Selected and Edited by Frederick Noel Paton*. London: Walter Scott; New York: Thomas Whittaker.

Coates, H. T. *The Fireside Encyclopedia of Poetry*. 27th ed., revised and enlarged. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates. \$5.

Dana, Katherine Floyd. *Our Phil, and Other Stories*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.25.

Davenport, R. B. *The Death-Blow to Spiritualism. Being the True Story of the Fox Sisters*. G. W. Dillingham. 60 cents.

Doudney, Sarah. *Under False Colors*. Scribner & Welford.

Downville, Lady Margaret. *Life of Lamartine*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

Fenn, G. M. *Quicksilver; or, The Boy with No Skid to his Wheel*. Scribner & Welford.

Fiske, J. *The Critical Period of American History, 1783-1789*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$2.

Fitzpatrick, W. J. *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator*. 2 vols. Longmans, Green & Co.

Flagg, E. De Molai: *the Last of the Military Grand Masters of the Order of Templar Knights*. Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson & Bros.

Fleming, May Agnes. *The Virginia Heiress*. Street & Smith.

Gissing, G. *A Life's Morning*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 25 cents.

Heaton, Mrs. Charles. *A Concise History of Painting*. New ed., revised. Scribner & Welford.

Herrick, Sophia Bledsoe. *The Earth in Past Ages*. Harper & Bros.

Hosmer, Prof. J. K. *Life of Young Sir Harry Vane*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$2.

Hugo, V. *The Man Who Laughs*. Illustrated by D. Verge and D. Rochegrosse. 2 vols. George Routledge & Sons. \$6.

Hurlbert, W. H. *Ireland Under Coercion: The Diary of an American*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.75.

Kabel, T. E. *Life of George Crabbe*. London: Walter Scott; New York: Thomas Whittaker.

Kydd, S. *A Sketch of the Growth of Public Opinion: Its Influence on the Constitution and Government*. A. C. Armstrong & Co. \$1.

Lanciani, Prof. R. *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$6.00.

Lees-Clutterbuck, B. C. 1887: *A Ramble in British Columbia*. Longmans, Green & Co. \$2.25.

Lewis, Mrs. Harriet. *Her Double Life*. Robert Bonner's Sons. 50 cents.

Little, Elizabeth N. *Log-Book Notes through Life*. White & Allen.

Macquoid, G. S. *Jacobite Songs and Ballads*. White & Allen. \$2.25.

*Magazine of Art*. Cassell & Co. \$5.

Manatt, I. J. *Xenophon: Hellenica*. Books I.—IV. Boston: Ginn & Co. \$1.75.

Moore, F. F. *Under Hatches; or, Ned Woodthorp's Adventures*. Scribner & Welford.

Muhlolland Rosa. *Glannetta: A Girl's Story of Herself*. Scribner & Welford.

Nettleship, R. L. *Works of Thomas Hill Green*. Professor of Moral Philosophy in Oxford University. Vol. III. *Miscellaneous and Memoir*. Longmans, Green & Co. \$7.

Parloa, Maria. *New Cook Book*. Illustrated. Boston: Estes & Lauriat.

Poor's Directory of Railway Officials. 1888-9. *Poor's Manual of Railroads*.

Pyle, H. *Otto of the Silver Hand*. Illustrated by the Author. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.

Schopenhauer, A. *Two Essays: I. On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason. II. On the Will of Nature*. Scribner & Welford.

Schumann, R. *Early Letters, Originally Published by his Wife*. Translated by May Herbert. Scribner & Welford.

Siller, F. *The Song of Manitoba, and Other Poems*. Milwaukee: T. S. Gray & Co.

Star Crossed: *The Life and Love of an Actress*. The Graphic Publishing Co. 50 cents.

*Sr. Nicholas*. Vols. XV, and XVI. November, 1887, to October, 1888. The Century Co.

Sumner, H. *The Besom Maker, and Other Country Folk Songs*. Illustrated. Longmans, Green & Co. \$1.

*The Bookworm*. A. C. Armstrong & Co. \$3.

The Thompson Street Poker Club. White & Allen. 50 cents.

The Voice of Nature. A. C. Armstrong & Son. 60 cents.

## Fine Arts.

### THE VERESTCHAGIN EXHIBITION.

WHATEVER creates a sensation in Europe, whether in the arts, the drama, or in literature, nowadays inevitably finds its way to New York. The exhibition of pictures by M. Vassili Verestchagin has been a little late in arriving, however, for some of the works now to be seen at the galleries of the American Art Association were shown in Paris fully ten years ago. Since then this collection has been exhibited in the important cities of Europe, finishing up with London, where it was shown last spring. Ingenious advertising, claptrap, and humbug found their highest expression in the methods employed here on behalf of the Munkacsy pictures the past two winters, and it is due to the Verestchagin management to say that so far their ways have been much less objectionable. No "private view for the clergy" or anything of that sort has been announced, and the accessories of the exhibition are of a different kind from those which distinguished the Munkacsy shows, with their mysterious gas-light effects and their hired weepers and attendants with muffled tread. Indeed, the arrangement of the Verestchagin galleries is elegant and in excellent taste. There are some very handsome rugs hung up here and there, some fine old tiles and pieces of pottery, some effective drapery and other articles used in the decoration of the rooms.

But the pamphlet is here. It appears in this case in the form of two appendices to the catalogue: Appendix No. 1, "Progress in Art," and Appendix No. 2, "Realism." Both are from the facile pen of M. Verestchagin himself; and in these the artist, or, as he is denominated in the catalogue, the "Painter, Soldier, Traveler," sets forth his principles and defines his creed. In "Progress in Art," great stress is laid on the necessity of depicting events which occurred out of doors, in out-of-door light, and not under the concentrated light of the studio window. The author in this does no more than repeat the teachings of Edouard Manet and Claude Monet, who preached the doctrine of *plein air* long before him, and, what is more, practised what they preached. The objections, "Not only in the perfect construction of their pictures, but also in the sublimity of conception, the old masters stand on an unapproachable height, and we can only strive after them," to quote M. Verestchagin's summary of such speeches; and again, "The same assertion blocks the way, 'The old masters have done thus, and therefore . . .,' " are not so often heard at the present time, but it is not because of M. Verestchagin's work that this is the case. As we have said, the new doctrine was preached before his time. Bastien-Lepage was one of

those who pushed it to complete and satisfactory results. M. Verestchagin, if judged by some of his works at the galleries in Twenty-third Street, has signally failed to do so. Take, for example, one of the pictures in the series of three which are grouped under the title of "Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth—Crucifixion by the Romans," No. 91. This picture represents the Crucifixion of Christ and the two thieves, as M. Verestchagin supposes it to have happened. He has visited the place; he has made studies there, presumably of the landscape and of the types of the people as he finds them in our time. The crucifixion took place out of doors. Does this picture look like a scene out of doors? Is there any air in this pasty gray and black sky? Is this hot color, this brickish red and yellow in the flesh tones, like the effect of diffused light? Are these brown shadows on the under sides of hands and arms, and under the chins of the people in the crowd, ever seen out of doors? And this flat look in everything—these heads, which are only masks cut out on the background, and these crudely colored garments, these garish whites and reds and yellows—do things look like that out of doors? Assuredly not; and if all this was not done under the disadvantage of artificial lighting "inside of four walls," then it is but a lame attempt to paint *en plein air*.

In the second appendix to the catalogue, "Realism," our artist-author says: "I hold, though, that the art of representing subjects in a realistic manner does not entitle a person to the name of realist," and he then proceeds to annihilate De Neuville because he painted some pictures of the Zulu war without going to Africa to get realistic effects after the war was over. "There are no Britishers nor Zulus to be found in the pictures. Instead of the former, we behold Frenchmen dressed up in British uniforms, and instead of Zulus, the ordinary Parisian negro-models, reproduced in various more or less warlike attitudes;" and the author asks, "Well, is that realism?" and answers quite rightly, "No." It is a matter of fact, however, that the pictures were painted principally in order to introduce portraits of British officers in the action, and this M. de Neuville did, and did very well on the whole. As for his own position as an artist and his own influence on civilization, M. Verestchagin quotes approvingly the following passages from an article published in a religious journal in London, the *Christian*: "These paintings are the work of a Russian, Verestchagin—a painter equal to any of his contemporaries in artistic ability, and beyond any painter who ever lived in the grandeur of his moral aims and the application of his lessons to the consciences of all who take the least pains to understand him. . . . I will only say that he who misses seeing these paintings will miss the best opportunity he may ever have of understanding the age in which he lives; for if ever the nineteenth century has had a prophet, it is the Russian painter Verestchagin."

A good part of this essay on "Realism" is devoted by the author to defending himself against the adverse criticisms which some of his pictures have received from those who have said that they are not true; and M. Verestchagin avers that he did them on the spot, and that they are true. We shall have to take his word for it: our business is now to consider how well he has represented pictorially what he saw. The first and one of the most important things in making a picture is composition. M. Verestchagin, however much he may insist upon the necessity of painting things just as they are, has nevertheless a tendency, very marked in some of his pic-

tures, to force a scene from life with its irregular grouping into arbitrary lines; he exhibits a decided preference for the triangle in composition, and uses it whenever possible. Note the perspective lines of the top of the wall at the left in the picture of the Crucifixion, and those of the tops of the three crosses on the right converging to the centre of the picture, in proof of this. The same thing is found in the "Blowing from Guns in British India," No. 92, in which the long row of soldiers and the victims at the mouth of each gun, the line of soldiers in the distance, and the line of the hills beyond, all converge to a point at the extreme left. The effect is forced and artificial. It is seen again in "The Kremlin," No. 90, and in each of the pictures catalogued under the title "Solomon's Wall," No. 13. As to general truthfulness of effect, in the rendering of values in sunlight and in shadow, for instance, there are varying degrees of merit in M. Verestchagin's work. In some of the pictures he exhibits marked skill in representing difficult effects on a large scale. In "The Window of Selim-Shisti's Monument," No. 51, a picture in which a number of Mohammedans in white clothing are shown grouped about a white marble veranda, in full sunlight, he is notably successful. The general effect impresses one as being true to nature, and the picture, moreover, is excellently painted in detail. "The Private Mosque of the Great Moguls in the Palace of Delhi," No. 61, is another example of successful treatment of large masses of white. The white marble walls and floors of the court and portico are in diffused light, with strong reflections, and the painter has made good use of the opportunity to produce a striking effect with simple means. The broad expanses of white marble are painted with just sufficient detail, and the differing values are rendered with much exactness of observation. Color notes of green and yellow, found in the costumes of the people praying in the portico, are introduced in the prevailing scheme of white with excellent results. Another picture, which shows M. Verestchagin's appreciation of subtle values, is a small canvas, a study from nature apparently, "The Earth Huts at Shipka," No. 76—a camp of soldiers, with the ground covered with a deep snow. But it is in the smaller of the two pictures called "Solomon's Wall," No. 13, that M. Verestchagin is seen at his best. It is quite the best picture in the collection, to our mind, and if there were more like it the purely art interest of the exhibition would not be so overshadowed by the sensational interest

to which so much prominence is given. This picture, which must not be confounded with the larger one with the same title and the same catalogue number—an inferior performance—possesses fine qualities of color, and is excellent in ensemble.

Of the numerous pictures of military subjects, of the pictures which we have been told present the horrors of war as they have never before been presented on canvas, there is little good to be said. "The Conquered," No. 88, a field covered with dead bodies, with a priest and a soldier in the foreground, is tame and uninteresting. "The Spy," No. 84, and "The Road of the War Prisoners," No. 86, are equally commonplace, though the story of the latter as related in detail in the catalogue is horrible enough. "After the Battle," No. 81, showing the tents of the hospital surgeons and a large number of wounded men after the battle of Plevna, tells its story better, but is of indifferent merit artistically, while "Before the Attack," No. 79, is cheap and tawdry in the extreme. M. de Neuville, whom M. Verestchagin affects to despise, has painted this sort of subjects infinitely better, and so have other military painters of the modern French school.

Scattered through the galleries are numerous small studies of heads in oil, "Russian Types," "Bhutanese of Sikkim in the Himalayas," "Hindu Workman," "Portrait of a Jewish Rabbi," etc., in which we might have expected to find some evidence of technical ability. Though usually pretty fairly drawn, they are, without exception, very weakly painted, and in no case do we find the slightest charm of color. "The Portrait of a Jewish Rabbi," No. 38, for example, is hot and "foxy" in color, and exceedingly hard and dry in *facture*. The wrinkles in the forehead are naïvely indicated by crooked lines of blackish paint. Where the artist has been unembarrassed by the difficulties inherent in the mere technical handling of color, his attempts at character study are more successful. His pencil drawings and drawings in oil wash on canvas, a number of which are hung in a gallery apart, and catalogued under the heading of Sketches, are many of them excellent, and some of them even admirable. They are among the most interesting things in the exhibition.

In the pictures illustrating the life of Christ, there is not so much ground for impugning the artist's motives as the sensational incident which occurred when they were exhibited in Vienna might have led us to expect. Realistical-

ly treated, and with as much of the *couleur locale* as it is possible to put into the composition at this late day, no doubt the picture of "The Holy Family," No. 45, possesses elements of truth and probability. It is likely that Verestchagin's picture comes nearer to being a representation of facts than do those of the same subject by Raphael and other masters of the Renaissance, who merely painted comely Italian women in conventional robes of blue or red, and beautiful children; or than those by Rembrandt do, who painted the common people of his native town in their every-day costume, as the companions of Christ. Nevertheless, his "Holy Family" is merely a picture of an Oriental family in a shady courtyard, where the father and an apprentice, one of his sons possibly, are at work at a carpenter's bench, and the mother is seen seated on the ground nursing an infant, and some other children are playing near by; while the son who was to become the Great Teacher sits apart at the bottom of a flight of stone steps, reading from a scroll which he holds in his hands. It is a fairly well-painted picture, and there is a good feeling of atmosphere in it, but it is not otherwise remarkable. No one, in looking at it, certainly, would think it was meant for a picture of the Holy Family, were it not that M. Verestchagin, in spite of his loudly heralded realism, has adopted the conventional type of head for his figure of Christ. Herein he renounces his realistic principles, and may be justly charged with sensationalism. Of the other pictures in this series there is little to be said, except that "The Prophecy," No. 49, and "Jesus in the Desert," No. 47, are strikingly suggestive of Claude Monet in the treatment of the landscape.

The largest picture in the exhibition is a huge canvas representing a procession through a street in Jeypore, with the Prince of Wales and his staff riding in company with the Maharajah and other native chiefs on the backs of elephants. It is called "The Future Emperor of India," and is much better done than show pictures of this sort are wont to be. There is decided ability of a certain order shown in the management of this panoramic canvas, and some very good painting in parts. It is needless to say it is theatrical; from the nature of the subject it could scarcely help being so. It will no doubt prove to be one of the most attractive features of this latest of picture shows, where the bass-drum accompaniment, though somewhat muffled, is yet loud enough to be offensive to delicate ears.

"Every child in America should have them."—*New England Journal of Education*.

"The 'Young Folks' Cyclopædia' should be in every juvenile library."—*From a Report of the Connecticut Board of Education*.

YOUNG FOLKS' { Common Things...\$2.50.  
CYCLOPÆDIA { Persons and Places...\$2.50

HENRY HOLT & CO., Publishers, New York.

## THE ISLE OF PALMS.

By DR. C. M. NEWELL. 12mo, 460 pp. Price, \$1.50. Illustrated by our best Marine Artists.

"Dr. Newell's new Ocean-romance is crowded with stirring incident and thrilling adventure. No one but a sailor could have written it, and only those who have witnessed such scenes can appreciate the marvellous fidelity of the descriptions. The wild, warring elements have for him a special fascination, which he pictures for landsmen with singular vividness."—*Boston Transcript*. "The Isle of Palms" is even more to a boy's liking than "The Voyage of the Fleetwing." It is the only story that describes a battle with the giant Devil Fish, which nearly destroyed the ship. But that which will most delight the juveniles of all ages is the pursuit and final capture of the most beautiful mermaid known of in Wonderland.

PUBLISHED BY  
DE WOLFE, FISKE & CO., Boston.

## Would You Like to Be Guided in a Helpful, Instructive Course of Reading approved by

Lyman Abbott, D.D., Edward Everett Hale, D.D., James H. Carlisle, LL.D., and other eminent men?

More than 60,000 persons are pursuing such a course under the direction of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle. We quote a few words from those students:

"Many a lonely hour has been cheered, and thought and memory turned into new and delightful channels by these readings. I hope to be better and stronger intellectually for the hours spent with my books."—*New York City*.

"I regret that I could not have had the advantage of such a course in early life, but it has brought so much comfort and happiness that I rejoice in the blessing, even though it came to me a quarter of a century late."—*Maine*.

Address, for full information,

CHAUTAUQUA OFFICE,

Plainfield, N. J.

## BOOK CHAT—1888—VOL. 3.

"Bright, novel, and original."

OCTOBER NUMBER JUST ISSUED.

CONTENTS: Some Notable Books; Selected Current Readings; Notes; New Books (this department contains reviews of over forty new English and American books); Latest French Books; Classified List, Without Comment, covering principal English books for the month with price and class; Magazine Leaders, indexing 272 Periodicals, American, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish; Latest Foreign Books, etc.

NOTICE.—THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF BOOK CHAT CONTAINS A 40-PAGE CATALOGUE OF STANDARD WORKS IN ALL BRANCHES OF LITERATURE, ARRANGED BY SUBJECT. Send for sample copy, 10 cents. \$1.00 per year.

BRENTANOS, Publishers,

New York—5 Union Square; Chicago—101 State Street; Washington—1015 Pennsylvania Ave.; Paris—17 Avenue de l'Opera.

A COURIER OF MANY YEARS' EXPERIENCE desires an engagement for European travel. Refers to patrons in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. Address F. S. BARNARD, 70 Rue Lauriston, Paris.

SCHOOL BOOKS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES. Miscellaneous Books in Foreign Languages. Catalogues on application. Foreign Periodicals. CARL SCHÖNHOFF, Importer, 144 Tremont St., Boston.

BABYHOOD.—Devoted to the care of Infants. \$1.50 a year. 5 Beekman St., New York.