

before he died he declared that he was eager to be away, because he was exceedingly curious to learn the nature and manners of the other world.

The most interesting of these sketches are those which deal with the less famous men. Hume, Smith, Boswell, and Burns have been abundantly described, and we are glad to read of the minor but not less remarkable characters whose works have passed almost out of recollection. Thomson and Smollett are treated with really sympathetic appreciation, and Robertson, Hutcheson, Ferguson, Macpherson, and others are well portrayed. The chapter on "Women of Letters" is capital, although these women were as careful to avoid fame for their writings as the men were to win it. Lady Anne Barnard has lately been revived in her letters from South Africa; but Lady Griselle Baillie, Mrs. Cockburn, Jane Elliot, and Lady Nairne deserve to be remembered with her.

We have not hesitated to complain of some of Mr. Graham's faults, to which we must add a vexatiously meagre index; and he has perhaps told nothing that other writers had not told before. But he has chosen, culled, and condensed with excellent judgment and with really admirable skill. We owe him hearty thanks for a very entertaining book about a number of the most interesting characters of a most interesting period. Whatever the future may bring forth, we shall not see such men and such times again.

*Fame and Fiction: An Enquiry into Certain Popularities.* By E. A. Bennett. London: Grant Richards; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

Mr. Bennett pursues his interesting and timely inquiry in a series of short articles which are not sedate enough to be called essays, but are lively, peremptory, pointed, altogether in the best style of literary journalism. His gravity is often captured by irony and converted into gayety; he is perfectly sensible, and sometimes witty. His first article, entitled "The Average Reader," sets forth the chief aim of his work, which is, "to explain to the minority why the majority likes or dislikes certain modern novelists." He imagines a reciprocal attitude, the smaller faction arrogating to itself a monopoly of "artistic feeling," refusing to consider the tastes and sympathies of the larger, which becomes, in consequence, defiant and bitterly resentful of leading-strings. His benevolent purpose is to readjust the minority's point of view, and to bring about a compromise whereby the multitude may be detached from its Miss Corelli and its Mr. Silas Hocking (the most popular novelist in England), and gently led—towards whom? No living novelist is definitely named as the goal of progress, but there is no doubt that to Mr. Bennett's mind that desirable position is at present adequately filled by Mr. George Moore, whose "Mummer's Wife" is described as "more than a masterpiece—one of the supreme novels of the century."

Though Mr. Bennett's notion of a great public ranged to defend to the death its cherished purveyors of fiction seems to us heated, his intervention is proffered in an excellent spirit. It is a pity that his analysis of the "average reader" does not promote confidence in a happy result. The best

he can say for this composite person is that he is unaffected and honest in his preferences, and can never be driven to buy a book because those who pretend to a superior taste say he should. Additionally to his credit, it is affirmed that he demands imperatively some "central righteousness"—a vague phrase, which, whether it be taken to imply mental or moral virtue, we are not able to perceive conspicuously shining in many of the objects of his delight. Mr. Bennett's spirits perceptibly rise when he abandons the ground of reasonable presumption and speaks as one having conviction about the defects of the average reader. We learn that he has some of the instincts of the untutored savage, "loving noise and glare and crude sentiment; that he hates to have the basic ideas of his existence disturbed," and is so dull that he doesn't know when he is bored. But what seems to us to make him a hopeless object for artistic missionaries, however resolute, looking upward and onward to Mr. George Moore, is, that "he has no sense of beauty—that is, beauty of form. He ignores it not only in imaginative literature, but in every art and in life. The most atrocious ugliness does not annoy him, and he has a blind spot in his eye for beauty."

Thus, almost vindictively, does Mr. Bennett vitiate his own plea, and when he announces triumphantly that Mr. Moore's artistic ideal, with its incorruptible and impeccable perfection, is "positively distasteful to the English temperament," he gives his case for compromise away. An artistic minority struggling to overcome national temperament shows itself bold but not wise. The attempt has been made several times in England, in more than one art, and we think it has always failed. The greatness of English literature abides in the matter rather than in the form, and a conceivable novelist, with a conscience not so exclusively artistic as Mr. Moore's, would, we think, be a more hopeful instrument, or bait, for attracting the Average Reader. We cannot see the slightest chance for a compromise to be based on the agreement of a British public to accept ideals and methods which are French to the point of servile imitation.

Mr. Bennett's conclusion, that the public demands sincerity in its novels, and can easily detect fraud, is not infallible. The public that makes ostentatious popularity has only recently learned to read, cannot think, and wants both to be diverted and to be informed. It is just in the condition to be taken in by clever, unscrupulous jugglers who have gauged its capacity and guessed its desire. To-day, to have ability for combining a story with incorrect information about history, or science, or society, or a future life, is to be potentially a popular novelist; but by the middle of the century this state of things will have changed. Labors of a regenerating minority are not to be despised, but it should not insist too much; it must give the people time.

*Japan: A Record in Colour.* By Mortimer Menpes. London: Adam & Charles Black; New York: Macmillan.

To attempt to transfer one's impressions of a country and people so distant both in space and in the inheritances of civilization as are the Japanese, by means

of one hundred colored sketches or pictures, is the bold enterprise of an artist. No doubt, in foggy and sooty London, this book will stir up objectors and unbelievers. Nevertheless those who, from years of residence, can recall both the variety of the coloring and the richness of nature in this ocean-girdled land of mountains and valleys, will heartily appreciate Mr. Menpes's attempt to tell a story in colors. One may be inclined to consider the text somewhat in the light of rhapsody, but will be slow to charge exaggeration upon these pictures.

This English artist, as we remember well, was in no hurry when he came to Japan. He took his time, he dwelt among artists and artisans, he found out where the fountains of artistic power were, and where the streams of appreciation of the beautiful among the lowly ran. He saw that the native finger, predestinated to do fine work, matched the head, able and trained to think out artistic surprises; and that continual observation of nature was the secret of the freshness and absence of monotony so characteristic of the work of the Japanese artisan. He realized also the depth of rascality to which the Japanese shop-keeper can normally descend, especially when he has the conceited, the blatant, and the purse-proud for his game. The end justifies the means, it is argued, for the bland native, assuming innocence or ignorance, dearly loves to take down the lofty alien. Mr. Menpes also discovered, what is patent to one dwelling among the Japanese artisans, gardeners, painters, children, and even geisha of the old school, how intensely the love of beauty is part of their lives.

Some of the mistakes in the text, due, perhaps, to imperfect hearing, or possibly to a delight in orthographic mutiny, are very amusing, as are also some of the artist's prejudices against Americans, and his occasional little preachments and moralizing, when he reminds one of a spoiled child. Yet these slight blemishes do not for one moment militate against the fact that he has in this book given us a wonderfully true and fascinating picture of Japan. Of the general trustworthiness of his statements there can be no reasonable doubt. From beginning to end, there is a childlike delight in the ways of the working people, who toil with head and hand to make the land they live in lovely, every object of use comely, and their surroundings attractive.

Of course, the attempt to put his original paintings into page spaces of five by four inches is much like that of breaking up grand oratorios into hymn tunes and the melodies of street songs. Nevertheless, the delicacy, richness, and brilliancy of still life are here wonderfully reproduced. Besides being a joy in themselves, these drawings stimulate the delights of memory. Whatever exaggeration there may occasionally be in the text, Mr. Menpes has not overcolored his pictures, nor has he failed to be realistic in rendering the countenances of his human subjects. He has not attempted to make his *mousmes*, or peasant girls, too exalted, or his babies and little folks too wise-looking, or his artisans too remote from common and even sordid care, while yet showing the joy which not only lightens but sweetens their toil. His chapters on the drama, on art

in practical life, and on gardens, besides the very suggestive one on "placing," will be approved even by the most sober critics who know the facts. If, in treating of the geisha, he walks in the broad road with the mob of writers on Japan, and overstates perhaps, one is less inclined even here to find fault with him because his comments, criticisms, and even appreciations are not those of the globe-trotter or the mercantile traveller, but of the true and genuine artist. The work is a veritable triumph of expression by means of most appropriate media.

*School Architecture: A General Treatise for the Use of Architects and Others.* By Edmund March Wheelwright. Boston: Rogers & Manson. 1901.

Mr. Edmund M. Wheelwright became known as the official architect of the city of Boston, not merely by the excellence of the buildings which he designed, but by his fearless honesty in everything connected with their erection. During his tenure of office it was his duty to design and supervise the erection of many school-houses, and he acquired in this way, as well as from his general practice, a knowledge of school architecture that has enabled him to speak with authority in his recently issued work bearing the above title. The fact that a book comes from a recognized expert is by no means an assurance that it will treat its subject satisfactorily. Too often the expert fails to get beyond the limits of his own experience or prejudices; he cannot see his subject whole. But in the present case there is no such trouble. It is not a view of school architecture in Boston or even in the United States that Mr. Wheelwright gives us, but rather a view of typical examples of the schools of most of the countries in which public education is well developed. He displays the plans of a very large number of schools, so arranged and so connected by the text that the reader is able quickly to grasp the typical solutions of the schoolhouse problem to which the system of any of the more important countries has given rise. Thus, for instance, in dealing with German schools, we have first a few words on the origin and history of the system and on its present condition, an enumeration of the sundry kinds of schools in use throughout the Empire, and finally examples of each of these, with intelligent comment and explanation. Similarly, but in a less extended way, France, England, and Scandinavia are treated, and finally the United States, to the schools of which more space is given than to those of any other country. The division of the work is not, however, purely geographical, since it is the elementary school in various countries that is first considered, then the secondary school, and finally manual-training schools, mechanic-arts high schools, and training schools for teachers.

At the end of the section devoted to elementary schools, Mr. Wheelwright institutes some interesting comparisons between those of our own country and those of Europe; and because the elementary schools are frequented by far more pupils than all other schools put together, and because it is on them that our whole educational system rests, it will be interest-

ing to review the deliberate judgment of our author regarding them. He selects for his comparison the best examples, the most recent types, whether at home or abroad, and very properly neglects antiquated or discredited systems. In the matter of equipment for gymnastic exercises, for bathing facilities, for instruction in cooking, and in manual training, he finds that American elementary schools are not generally as well provided as are those of Northern Europe, or even of England. The feature of the school garden, already widely in use in Northern Europe, is practically unknown in the United States. In the area and treatment of their playgrounds, American schools are deficient when compared with those of Europe. On the other hand, however, in our elementary class-rooms, we allow a greater floor area per pupil and a greater number of cubic feet of air per pupil than are found in those of any other country. Excepting, perhaps, in the Swiss and in a few recent English schools, American practice provides an ampler supply of warmed fresh air and larger ducts for ventilation than may be found elsewhere. In the best American examples a more satisfactory provision for the disposal of outdoor clothing is made than is the case anywhere except in Switzerland and Scandinavia. A more generous provision of individual desks for pupils is made in America than in any other country.

In one very important way, Mr. Wheelwright finds our elementary schools inferior to those of Europe, and that is in the matter of the distribution of daylight in their class-rooms. In Germany and in Europe generally it is very properly held that light, while abundant, should be admitted to the class-room only from the left of the pupils. Now light, even under such high ceilings as are usual in school-rooms, will not carry satisfactorily in a room wider than twenty-four feet. At the same time a limit of usefulness is soon reached in the length of the room, beyond which pupils are so far from the teacher as to be out of control. It follows, therefore, if the class unit is fixed at a high number, that either efficient control by the teacher or the proper diffusion of light must be sacrificed. In America, since the unit of elementary classes is generally fifty-six pupils, it has been found necessary to make the width of rooms twenty-eight feet, resulting, except in corner rooms, in a dark area along the hall-side of the room, and, in corner rooms, in the introduction of windows in the wall opposite the teacher—a practice as fatal to the teachers' eyesight as would be the use of windows in the opposite wall to that of the pupils. This is a state of affairs over which our architects have manifestly no control, and until our system is modified by the adoption of a class unit of forty-eight or, better, forty pupils, we cannot hope that, in the very important matter of their lighting, our schools will compare favorably with those of Europe.

Mr. Wheelwright's book is intended not alone for architects, but for all who are interested in the deeply important problem of the proper housing of school-children.

*The Art and Craft of Garden-Making.* By Thomas H. Mawson, Garden Architect.

London: B. T. Batsford; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1891.

Of the making of gardens there is no end; neither is there any end of the making of books about gardens. Among the latest is this by Mr. Mawson, an Englishman—or, rather, the second edition of it, for the first edition was soon exhausted. The author treats his subject from the point of view of the professional garden architect. He holds the happy medium between the extreme formalism of the architect's garden and the complete formlessness too often characteristic of the landscape garden. He deals with such subjects as the choice of site for a garden and the way to treat it, of fences and gates suitable for parks and gardens, of gateways, carriage courts and drives; curbing the fancy of the artist with the practical experience of the engineer. To flower-gardens he naturally gives large space, for gardens are the heart of his matter. Such useful things as kitchen-gardens and orchards do not escape his attention. Thus, from a brief outline of its contents, it will be seen that his work is devoted to the design of gardens and of the surroundings of houses rather than to horticulture; yet that side of the subject is not entirely neglected, since the various trees and flowers grown in Great Britain are treated in some concluding chapters.

The essay, though it lacks high inspiration and delicate touch, fills a useful niche, and is on a far higher plane than the literary output of the average landscape-gardener. Mr. Mawson shows himself in sympathy with the best, both of the old methods and of the new, nor is his work as an artist without its own peculiar attractiveness. His volume is well illustrated—here by photographs of existing gardens, there by pen-and-ink sketches or perspective drawings. In brief, 'The Art and Craft of Garden-Making' is one of the best among recent publications of its kind.

*James McNeill Whistler: The Man and his Work.* By W. G. Bowdoin. M. F. Mansfield & Co.

The author of 'The Gentle Art of Making Enemies' is the reviewer who could best do justice to the above work, and to his tender mercies we should like to recommend it. Like "Rusty Christopher," Mr. Bowdoin "mingles praise and blame," and it is his praise that we should expect Mr. Whistler's delicate temper to find the more intolerable. In its externals the book is got up to resemble its hero's own publications, but the resemblance does not extend to the writer's style. Imagine the fastidious Whistler reading such sentences as this: "It is but a portrait, and yet it conjures up all that is finest in a young girl, and renders the composition most satisfactory, and makes of it one that is seldom equalled and more rarely excelled." Or this: "While Whistler's art has immortalized Chelsea, the works of both Rossetti and Swinburne have not had similar and appreciable inspiration thus."

One more paragraph we are tempted to give in full, as a sample of both style and reasoning. It is as follows:

"It is possibly as an etcher that Whistler has received the apogee of appreciation and acceptance. There is, it must be said, a