

its author's own description of it as a drama of passion relieves us from the duty of looking for a "thèse." The "halo of false martyrdom" which Mr. Davidson would have us see in the fate of Adèle is not implied in the play itself, whether read or acted in the spirit of true interpretation. But the share of attention given in this volume to Dumas's dramatic work is, in the eye of an English reader, excessive; for, with us, contemporary drama holds by no means the exalted position which it occupies in France; nor, save for their marvellous rapidity of movement and the strong dramatic coloring of many of their scenes, do the plays of Dumas père seem to warrant anything more than the highest order of melodramatic success. The same qualities set off by sprightliness of dialogue keep some of his comedies alive. The chapters entitled "The Great Novels" and "The Monte Cristo Epoch" are in the nature of synopses, rather than of critical studies, which, indeed, those famous books would hardly justify. As for the fragmentary "Isaac Laquedem," representing Dumas's efforts in the direction of philosophical romance on a large scale, candid examination compels the conviction that its suppression by the Censor was an arbitrary kindness to the author's reputation. Who can doubt that Dumas was here slyly endeavoring to outdo Eugène Sue and Balzac together by uniting their totally divergent methods in a single gigantic incongruity?

The point specially emphasized in Mr. Davidson's treatment of the novels concerns not so much the vivid light with which Dumas could surround historic scenes and characters, as the fundamentally sound impression of history and important relations in the past which are generally to be found in his works:

"What impression of the main characters and events of French history will these romances leave on a reader who knows French history only through them? Will such an one on the whole see right? Doubtless, yes. About the course of religious strife, of domestic intrigue, of foreign policy, he will gather little that 'serious history' will have him unlearn" (p. 222).

The same order of praise has often been bestowed with equal liberality on Dumas's acknowledged master in fiction. Should any writer of "serious history" feel constrained to dispute the claim of either, we may safely leave him to be dealt with by Mr. Davidson, whose undeniable capacity for brilliant biographical study has not been allowed to mislead his judicial sense.

THREE NOVELS.

Confessions of a Wife. By Mary Adams. The Century Co. 1902.

Doctor Bryson. By Frank H. Spearman. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1902.

Out of Gloucester. By James B. Connolly. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1902.

With Mr. Laurence Housman in mind, and reflecting that what man has done with profit, man may do, we will not venture to say that no man could have written the 'Confessions of a Wife.' There is a type of fiction, the purely emotional, which has been found to sell all the better for an air of verisimilitude. The absence of a name from the title-page was one of the best advertisements of the 'Englishwoman's Love-Letters,' and in the present case "Mary

Adams" is confessedly a nom de plume. But there is no doubt whatever that the book was written for women, and those who agree with Professor Münsterberg will see in it a fresh confirmation of their fears for an American literature which bears the *cachet* of feminine taste and standards. At the time of Mr. Housman's *succès de mystère*, we were assured by more than one American woman that the situation described in the 'Love-Letters' was typically British, or, at any rate, European; that, in fact, no high-spirited American would have furnished that spectacle of sentimental slavery to an unresponsive object. But Marna Herwin is of a constancy beside which the "Englishwoman" appears flippant. We confess, for our part, that, in reading the "Book of the Heart," as the heroine prefers to call her diary, our sympathies were all on the side of Dana Herwin. What patience could support the emotional *gaucherie* of a woman who addresses her husband as "Thou Strongest," and signs herself "Your Wildeiness Girl in Chains," in notes that meet his eye in unexpected places at the rate of three a day? "Darling," begins a "Second Note," "will you mind two notes from me? I will slip this one under your pillow, so you will find it later than the pin-cushion one" (p. 94). The Marna type of woman does not profit by experience. On page 152 she writes: "Will you be patient with one of my constitutional notes? It is a good while since I have written you any, for I see that they sometimes annoy you in these days." She goes on to ask her husband what he means by underlining an allusion to a "wearing woman" in a book that she was reading. We are already some months from the day when she wrote: "Thou Glorious! . . . here alone in my rose-colored room, my soul turns to thee as if thou wert a god upon a cloud." We are told later that it was about this time that Dana Herwin began to take morphine.

There are passages in the 'Confessions' that almost incline one to the theory that the book was written as a savage study of the disastrous results of sentimentalism uncontrolled by a sense of humor. The sentiment is always overdone, but it touches caricature when Marna writes, "To Ina in Heaven," "You would have been my bridesmaid, . . . you would have worn a robin's-egg-blue silk mull." We pass over the lyrical treatment of a certain ruby ring called "Heart of the Wife," and content ourselves with a mere mention of what may be called the "ruby gown" motif. On page 7 Marna "loves to get into a ruby gown and write like this"; a little later we are told that "my ruby gown, especially the velvet part of it, seems to understand me," and, in fact, for three years the appearance of the ruby gown marks a sentimental crisis. The writer probably intends the reading public to sympathize with Marna, "whom nobody understands," but a woman whose exacting sentiment drives her husband to Montevideo and morphine deserves the consequences. Dana Herwin's return and the stages of his cure from the morphine habit are not badly described. He returns, a broken-spirited man, to a series of reconciliation scenes, and we are left with a characteristic view of his wife: "I got into my ruby gown—the dear old faded thing. I wrote the note and slipped it into his hand, and evaded him and left him to read it."

The hero of 'Doctor Bryson' is a Chicago oculist, and the heroine and all the minor characters are his patients. Two-thirds of the book is taken up with minute descriptions of operations and illness. Two children are introduced in order that one may die of malignant croup and the other go through "Tonnesco's operation" and diphtheria. The hero barely recovers from pneumonia, while the heroine, who to our infinite relief seemed about to escape with simple astigmatism, ends as a star case of hysterical amblyopia. Mr. Spearman is so preoccupied with the pathological that he cannot mention a typewriter, who is of no further consequence to the story, without telling us that she has "lips that breed hemorrhages." The tale itself is a mere thread on which to hang descriptions of up-to-date surgery. It is not Mr. Spearman's realism to which we take exception; in the description of the horrors of disease he is easily surpassed by D'Annunzio. But we forgive D'Annunzio for certain passages, when we do forgive him, because of the undeniable beauty and power of the rest. 'Dr. Bryson' is not a work of art, and it does not fulfil one of the chief functions of a work of fiction, which is, surely, to entertain. It is, however, written with a certain force and power of description, and the picture of boarding-house life in Chicago is dreary enough to be true to life.

'Out of Gloucester' is the rather awkward title of six short stories of the adventures of fishermen of Gloucester and their like. They are written with great spirit, and can be recommended to all who enjoy thrilling tales of sea life. All the stories but one illustrate the racing powers and seaworthiness of the Gloucester fishing-boats, and the daring (not to say foolhardiness) of their skippers in eluding British cutters and poaching within the three-mile limit. "A Fisherman of Costla" is laid in Galway Bay, with which the author is evidently familiar. He is wise in not attempting to reproduce the native dialect; but he should not make an Irishman speak of an outside car as a "jaunting-car," a word never heard from Irish lips; nor is an Irishman likely to call a train "the cars" (p. 118). But these are slight slips in a realistic description of an extremely risky sail in a "hooker" to the Arran Islands from Galway. Mr. Connolly's stories often remind us of 'Captains Courageous,' though he is less interested in the fishing trade of the Gloucester men than in their ability to handle their boats and race them under full sail, regardless of rough weather.

A Treatise on Title-Pages. With Numerous Illustrations in Facsimile, and Some Observations on the Early and Recent Printing of Books. By Theodore Low De Vinne, A.M. The Century Co. 1902. 12mo, pp. xx, 486.

This third volume in the series entitled "The Practice of Typography" is built upon a last-year publication of the Grolier Club. Now, withdrawn from that exclusiveness, the essay is offered to the public with a change in proportion. The practical part has been greatly enlarged for the benefit of all who pursue the typographic calling, but also to the immediate advantage of authors and for the general cultivation of taste respecting the art of book-making. The subject is limited in effect to title-

pages set with type, and their evolution is traced from the printer's colophon at the end of the book (the place still occupied in English usage) to the present time. The French were the first to shift the printer's device from rear to front, and this practice was revived in 1840 by the English Pickering. The German Ratdolt, practising his craft in Venice, first employed engraved borders. Title-pages engraved on copper were indigenous in Italy, which contributed very little to displayed title-pages. Some time before 1840 Didot in Paris contrived the condensed type for title-pages, and to this day Mr. De Vinne finds the average French title-page more attractive than the British or American; the Germans are out of the count, because their Gothic capital letters are intractable.

In part ii. the modern title-page is considered in all its bearings, with some citations of rules and more suggestion of the true principles of composition, with a rich array of actual examples in facsimile, faced now and again by critical resettings—in one case by six. Part iii. is specially designated "Critical," and, among other things, reviews the Kelmscott typography in the light of Morris's avowed aim to produce books not only having "a definite claim to beauty," but "easy to read." Mr. De Vinne cannot think this end to have been attained. He points out some of the difficulties which Morris encountered from his own fonts, and gives unqualified praise only to the presswork, which no fifteenth-century printer surpassed.

All this is illuminating without being dogmatic. We particularly call attention to what is said *passim* about the legibility of masses of lines set in capitals, and about amateur invention of letters in the name of decoration. It should be taken to heart by publishers of magazines who offend every canon of typographic taste by printing poems, not only smothered in futile ornament, pictorial or arabesque, but made absolutely unreadable by being lettered by hand. It passes our understanding how the poets themselves can tolerate such treatment—above all, as often happens, on a first appearance. With most of Mr. De Vinne's likes and dislikes we find ourselves in accord. He always has in mind the parallelogram which conditions the printer's liberties with symmetry; he is radically sound as regards spacing, and emphasis, and the mixture of fonts. His own compositions are irreproachable. Sometimes we could wish for a little more color, and we rather sympathize with the French habit of securing this, even when the stress has to fall on the less significant word. Nor do we feel averse to dashes, at least to the same extent as our author. In objecting *in toto* to the use of the ampersand, he appears to us to overlook its possible decorative function; and we answer his inquiry why should we suffer it in a title-page when we exclude it from the text, by alleging the exigency of space and balance, which is no concern of the ordinary letterpress. The ruled border, again, we have a soft side for, but with reserves: if Fitzgerald had in mind those which passed muster with his publisher, we cannot wonder that he invited Wright to "spew at Quaritch's ornamentation." The book closes with ten instructive variations on one theme by Mr. Jacobi of the Chiswick Press. The sixth, seventh, and eighth of

these suggest an escape from the weakness too often shown in the regulation three-line publisher's imprint.

We commend once more the present volume, and the series, to all who take an interest in the history and the high maintenance of Gutenberg's gift to mankind. They are a mine of curious information and illustration.

Dante and the Animal Kingdom. By Richard Thayer Holbrook. Macmillan (Columbia University Press).

The diversity of Dante's admirers furnishes perennial proof of the great Florentine's many-sidedness. A new illustration of this comprehensive charm appears in the above volume. Here we find an author who has nothing but contempt for mediæval science, who misses no opportunity to sneer at dogmatic theology, who repeatedly confesses a lack of interest in the essential features of the "Paradiso," who shows (in this work at least) no sympathy with allegory, but is nevertheless so fascinated by external beauties, the by-play of Dante's genius, that he is willing to devote himself, with "lungo studio" and presumably with "grande amore," to the production of a new Dante book. Let it be said at once that the book is an excellent one: as a collection of valuable material it will long be indispensable to the specialist, and as reading for the general public it ought to prove entertaining even to those entirely unacquainted with the 'Commedia.'

The author's "Animal Kingdom" includes not only man and the lower beasts, but also the devils and the angels. While these latter creatures cannot, by any extension, be called animals, they are in some ways so closely connected with the subject proper that the omission of them would have left a distinct gap. Dr. Holbrook's great merit is to have set clearly before us the mediæval attitude toward animals, and to have interpreted all the references that Dante makes to beasts in the light of the strange folk-lore that had gathered about them. He finds Dante more conventional, in his use of animal traits, than has generally been supposed; in many cases, however, he concedes to his poet direct personal observation. Even when imitating, Alighieri generally contrives to stamp the copy with his own mark. "Dante," says our author, "has known how to give to a mere literary reminiscence an energy that few writers can impart from the observation of real life." As far as we can ascertain his own preferences, the Florentine, according to Dr. Holbrook, would seem to have been indifferent to horses, to have disliked dogs, hated wolves, despised sheep, and admired falcons, which he described with great accuracy. Dr. Holbrook also excels in his chapter on "Falconry," where he succeeds in illuminating the episode of Alichino and Calcabrina.

In his endeavor to say something about every animal mentioned by Dante, the author occasionally (as in the chapter on the goat) fills in with irrelevant matter, or (as in the treatment of the ass) indulges in somewhat fantastic speculation. In general, however, the work is very substantial; and while no important contribution is made to the solution of any of the great problems, a clear and constant light is

shed upon all of Dante's beast-shapes, making them appear in their true mediæval aspect. There are eighteen well-chosen illustrations, nearly all belonging to the Middle Ages; the three colored plates are decidedly attractive, but the most interesting, perhaps, are the "Christ of Salerno," the "Three-Headed Satan," and the "Generation of Vipers."

The chief defect of the book (in the eyes of a reader perhaps unduly serious) is its unsympathetic levity of tone. One is constantly jarred, and either amused or pained, by such flippant passages as these: "In thirteen hundred years the world above him has made some changes in divinities and demons, and Charon, son of Erebus, feels that he must obey the new régime. . . . After thirteen hundred years, Minos has grown a tail." A few small inaccuracies and omissions may be noted. On page 24 we read: "It is interesting to learn from what Dante says later [in 'De Vulgari Eloquentia'] that the serpent must have spoken Hebrew." But Dante corrects the statement in question in the "Paradiso," xxvi, 124. From the description on page 55 one would infer that the Minotaur was in immediate proximity to the Centaurs, instead of being separated from them by a mighty precipice. The "acqua" outside the City of Dis is called on page 211 a "marsh of heretics." On page 242 the tale of Aucassin is assigned without comment to the twelfth century. In several places one misses a reference to the 'Magnæ Derivationes' of Uguccione da Pisa, recently discussed by Paget Toynbee. In the note on Ciacco (pp. 177-8) might have been inserted the title of Scherillo's article in the *Nuova Antologia* (xciv, p. 427). The story of the whale mistaken for an island (p. 204) occurs in the first voyage of Sindbad the Sailor; it may be worth while to state that the same yarn is contained in the Provençal bestiary published by Appel in his 'Chrestomathie' (p. 204). Good evidence of the existence of fish-ponds in the gardens of rich Italians (p. 217) is to be found in the sixth story of the tenth day of the 'Decameron.' In connection with Bernart's poem, "Quant vei la lauzeta mover," reference might have been made to Smith's 'Troubadours at Home' (II., p. 162), where we find an English translation and the original music of this beautiful song.

The "Times" History of the War in South Africa. Vol. II. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1902.

The second of the six handsome volumes which are to constitute this history is, like its predecessor, illustrated with excellent maps, and with fine photogravure portraits of notable persons on both sides of the contest. The series is edited by L. S. Amery, fellow of All Souls, while the narrative is written by several members of the *Times* staff of war correspondents.

The most distinctive feature of the present volume, aside from its use of much important material made especially available since the close of hostilities, is its searching criticism of the organization of the British army at the outbreak of the war, and of the conditions, both among responsible officials and in public opinion, which prepared the way for the deep humiliation of the British nation which attended most of the activities in the field, down, at least,