

has just reprinted in old style as a "dummy" little volume (350 copies) the "Narrative of the Captivity of Mrs. Johnson," first printed at Walpole, N. H., in 1796. There were other editions printed at Windsor, Vt., in 1807 and 1814; Lowell, Mass., in 1834; New York, in 1841, etc.

Correspondence.

MISS COLERIDGE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The sudden death of Miss Mary Elizabeth Coleridge on August 25 has left a void in literature as well as a dear memory with many friends. It is just ten years since the publication of her best novel, "The King with Two Faces," announced the advent of another Coleridge to that world of English letters where her family had filled so large a part, and of another Coleridge gifted with the same fine quality of intangible romance, and with much of the same "shaping spirit of imagination," as had haunted and distinguished the greatest of them all. Miss Coleridge had already published before that a characteristic book, "The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus" (1893), in which her friends had realized her strength. But in this earlier book a certain want of definiteness, an inclination to love half-shadows overmuch which her novels did not always escape, prevented any popular recognition of her work. With more than a touch of her great-uncle's genius, she had inherited some of his elusiveness, too. "Coleridge's poetry," a considerable critic once wrote, "leaves too much of the feeling of a walk through a fine country on a misty day"—peeps of great beauty with tantalizing shadows interspersed; from this perplexing quality Miss Coleridge's earliest book, like some of her latest books, was not quite free. But in "The King with Two Faces" she came into her own. She struck at once a note of high romance: and the story and its setting were such as all the world could understand.

Miss Coleridge was not a rapid worker, and the claims of family and friendship always with her came before her own. It was some years before this success was repeated. Her next novel, "The Fiery Dawn" (1901), with its brilliant sketch of the Duchesse de Berri and her forlorn high-spirited enterprise among the Legitimists of France, original, characteristic, and full of fine romantic interest as it is, was less clear and striking than its predecessor; and the slighter sketches of modern life which followed it, unconventional and imaginative as they are, were less suited to the genius of a writer who worked best upon a high, ambitious theme. But "The King with Two Faces" stands apart. As a historical novel, it has had no rival of late years. Its treatment is in the highest degree original. Its canvas is singularly large. The art which can carry the reader without effort through some of the most stirring scenes in the life of Gustavus of Sweden—that crowned knight-errant, half hero, half demented dreamer, but always impressive, wayward, picturesque—and which, unsatisfied with that full theme, can plunge him into the heart of the French Revolution, and reproduce the touching gal-

lanty of Fersen and the brilliant egotism of Madame de Staël, without losing the romance of the story in the larger romance of the history it enfold, is art of no ordinary kind. Mystery and adventure are ever present in the air; and mystery, touched with a rare imagination, is the atmosphere which it seems natural for the Coleridges to breathe. The dramatic opening of the book, the charm and wonder of the early chapters, the haunting sense of calamity impending, the fresh and captivating movement of the tale, the picture of Gustavus appearing on a gaunt hack, worn, dragged, imperturbable, alone, after midnight, at the gate of Gothenburg, the picture of Marie Antoinette, a stately and beautiful woman sitting by the fire, holding a little child in her arms, and singing to it low and wearily, while yet a touch of irresistible gayety in the soft, sweet voice brought tears into the listener's eyes—

Ah, que je fus bien inspirée
Quand je vous regus dans ma cœur!

touches and pictures such as this help to make up a story which lovers of good literature will not allow to die.

But admirable as this great novel is, and full of charm, of fancy, of discrimination as are the essays which Miss Coleridge occasionally published, and the criticism of books which she contributed to the *Monthly Review* and to the literary supplement of the *London Times*, her most characteristic work was in her verse. Literary criticism was a form of writing which gave her great pleasure, and which she did specially well. Literary counsel and encouragement, things which she appreciated greatly, and which perhaps to some extent she needed for herself, were gifts she never grudged her friends. Henry Newbolt and Robert Bridges, who were for years among her literary intimates, and other writers not less known and distinguished, delighted to exchange opinions and confidences in literature with her. And many who knew her closely owed almost as much to her fine taste and to her fastidious judgment, as to the example which she unconsciously set them of a beautiful and an unselfish life. She had the power which Carlyle attributed to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a signal power of "attracting brave souls." But the two little volumes of exquisite verse which she published anonymously, "Fancy's Following" and "Fancy's Guerdon," small in bulk as they are, contain the most delicate and finished work which she produced. Imagination of a rare intensity, a sense of melody most finely tuned, and a fancy touched in no small degree with that magic and enchantment which have led Shelley and Swinburne to speak of Coleridge's lyrics with almost exaggerated praise, stamp these little volumes with a quality which only high poetry attains. Sympathy and understanding fell to Miss Coleridge in a measure in which they fall to few. Her critical faculty, always watchful and illuminating, perhaps aroused self-criticism which checked her in creative work. But in her short literary life she has left us enough to justify a great tradition, and to win the admiration of the public as well as the hearts and the homage of her friends. M.

West Horsley, Leatherhead, England, August 30.

Miss Coleridge also published two other

novels, "The Shadow on the Wall," 1904, and "The Lady on the Drawing-room Floor," 1906; and a volume of essays, "Non Sequitur," 1900.

GERMAN METHODS OF STUDYING LITERATURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I have been much interested in Professor Kuno Francke's letter (*Nation* of August 15) in defence of Lamprecht's "Germany in the Eighteenth Century," and especially in their common opinion of the methods of the literary historian who thinks he has explained everything when he is able to point to some foreign literary influence, and to whom the tracing of the formal influence of one writer upon another is the chief end rather than one of many means. But what does Professor Francke mean when he says: "Fortunately, we may add, such views are not held by any one worth considering"? Is it not a fact that such views are the almost unanimous opinion of the academic scholars of Germany? Though in the study of modern German literature itself there may have been some advance, there are a hundred or more university professors whose special fields lie in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Scandinavian, or mediæval literature; I challenge Professor Francke to mention more than half a dozen whose point of view is other than the one he condemns. Thousands of doctoral dissertations in these fields, the results of the university training of their authors, have been published in the last decade; I challenge him to mention half a dozen whose point of view is not the same. When he says that "such views are not held by any one worth considering," does he mean to bring a general indictment against the literary training of the German universities? J. E. SPINGARN.

Leedsville, N. Y., August 29.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I am very glad indeed to find in Professor Spingarn an ally against the soulless and spiritless methods of studying literature which prevail to-day, not in German universities alone. If he were to press me, I should feel bound to admit that of the doctor dissertations on literary subjects, either from Germany or America which have come to my knowledge during the last ten years, the bulk seemed to me hardly worth serious consideration. As to living literary historians of repute, I certainly could not name more than half a dozen who approach a work of literature from within rather than from without. But is not this a good many? Does not in this respect also the old saying hold good: Εἰς ἑπὶ μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος?

KUNO FRANCKE.

Gilbertsville, N. Y., September 4.

INFANT MORTALITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In reading the interesting review of Dr. Newman's "Infant Mortality" published in your issue of August 1, (p. 104), I felt a suspicion that the statistical foundation for the author's argument was not beyond challenge. Can you grant me a little space in which to raise the question?

Dr. Newman states his subject as follows:

The infant mortality rate . . . is not declining, and this is the broad fact which constitutes the problem to be considered. Children under twelve months of age die in England to-day, in spite of all our boasted progress, and in spite of an immense improvement in the social and physical life of the people, as greatly as they did seventy years ago (p. 18).

Elsewhere he generalizes his results for England in the statement: "The infant mortality rate, as a rule, is stationary or even increasing" (p. 7).

Every one knows that deaths of very young children constitute a great proportion of all deaths, but to be informed that they constitute an increasing proportion, that the steady and rapid decline of the death rate at nearly every age does not extend to infants, but that they, almost alone in the community, are not profiting from the medical and sanitary progress in which we take pride, may have aroused in the minds of others of your readers, as it did in mine, both surprise and incredulity.

The question not considered by Dr. Newman, but of primary interest to your readers, is infant mortality in the United States increasing? may be considered first. The best answer to it is found in the rates for the registration area. These were 206 deaths per 1,000 infants living under one year of age in 1890, and 165 deaths per 1,000 infants in 1900. The conclusion from these figures is supported by evidence from Massachusetts, our most important registration State. In that State the average death rate under one year of age to 1,000 births for 1890 to 1894 was 16.3, for 1895 to 1899 was 15.2, and for 1900 to 1904 was 14.1. This evidence points to a marked decline of infant mortality in the United States.

Let me ask in the second place whether Dr. Newman is correct in his general statement of "the problem to be considered," whether it is true as a rule that the rate of infant mortality "is not declining," but "is stationary or even increasing." The French Government has recently made a compilation of the vital statistics published by the several European countries from the earliest period, and has analyzed the results. In the section dealing with deaths, published in 1906, the conclusion regarding infant mortality is stated as follows: "In almost every country, infant mortality is decreasing, the exceptions being the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, and Belgium," and the tables preceding this discussion show a decrease of infant mortality in fourteen countries of Europe, and an increase in only five, three of which are England, Scotland, and Ireland. Apparently a decrease of infant mortality is the rule in Europe, and not the exception.

Let me ask, finally: Does England constitute a real exception to the general fact? Does the country at whose feet in matters of registration and of sanitary legislation the world has been sitting for three-quarters of a century stand almost alone in showing no decrease of infant mortality? The evidence offered by Dr. Newman, seemingly conclusive as it is, fails to convince me. When he probes that evidence carefully he finds that "there has been an increase in the deaths in the first trimester, accompanied by a decrease, or at least an almost stationary position, in the last two trimesters of the first year of life"; and that "within the first quarter the rise has

been almost wholly in the first month, and within the first month almost wholly in the first week" (p. 15). He does not hold then that there has been any significant increase of infant mortality in England after the first week of life.

Nearly forty years ago one of the leading statisticians in France, Dr. L. A. Bertillon, published the following statement:

In England we cannot hope to measure infant mortality accurately, because there are many omissions in the registration, both of births and of the deaths of infants.

In support of this statement he pointed out that an interval of six weeks was, and I believe still is, allowed to elapse between a birth and its registration instead of the three days usually prescribed in the Continental countries; that no registration of still-births was required; and that the rates of infant mortality in France and England after the first month were almost identical; but that for the first month the rate in England was only half that in France, showing clearly "that many deaths of children occurring during the first month are not registered" (sc. in England). I am not aware that this criticism has ever been answered. Certainly it is accepted as valid by the French publication of 1906 already quoted. A committee of the House of Commons reported in 1893: "There is reason to think . . . that the number of children buried in the United Kingdom annually as still-born is enormous"; that is, that many children born alive, but dying within the forty-two days allowed for registration, are buried without registration of the birth or death. Now we have only to assume that these violations of law have become a little less frequent during the period covered by the figures in order to find in that change a complete explanation of the apparent increase in the mortality of very young infants in England.

WALTER F. WILLCOX.

Cornell University, Ithaca, September 2.

Notes.

The Macmillan Co's fall announcement list includes a new novel by F. Marion Crawford, "Arethusa," a tale of Constantinople; "The Gulf," an American story by John Luther Long; new translations of Björnson's "In God's Way" and "The Heritage of the Kurts"; "Theodore Roosevelt: the Boy and the Man," classed as a "juvenile," by James Morgan; "The Iliad for Boys and Girls," by A. J. Church; "Florence and the Cities of Northern Tuscany, with Genoa," by Edward Hutton; "Highways and Byways in Kent," by Walter Jerrold, illustrated by Hugh Thomson; "Rivieras of France and Italy," painted and described by Gordon Howe; "The Seven Ages of Washington," by Owen Wister; "My Life in the Underworld," by Jack London; the Memoirs of Alexander Dumas, translated by E. M. Waller; "The Gentlest Art," an anthology of the most entertaining letters in the English language, edited by E. V. Lucas; "Philosophical Essays and Discussions," by Frederic Harrison; "A Self-supporting Home," by Mrs. Kate V. Saint Maur; "An Artist's Reminiscences," by Walter Crane; the Letters of the late Dean Hole; the second volume of Prof. Ed-

ward Channing's "History of the United States"; "British Colonial Policy, 1754-1765," by George Louis Beer; a new volume of poems by Alfred Noyes; "Specimens of Modern English Literary Criticism," selected by Prof. William T. Brewster; "England," a discussion of the organization and construction of its government, general, local, and colonial, by Prof. A. Lawrence Lowell; "Essentials of Economic Theory," by Prof. J. B. Clark; "The Rate of Interest," by Prof. Irving Fisher; "The Government of European Cities," by Prof. William Bennett Munro; "Essays in Municipal Administration," by Prof. John A. Fairlie; "The Outlook for the Average Man," by Dr. Albert Shaw; "Primitive Secret Societies," by Prof. Hutton Webster; "Negro Races," by Jerome Dowd; "British State Telegraphs" and "Public Ownership and the Telephone in Great Britain," by Prof. Hugo R. Meyer; "Railway Corporations as Public Servants," by Henry S. Haines; "Principles of Taxation," a volume in the Citizens' Library, by Max West; "Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion," by Frank Byron Jevons; "the Seeming Unreality of the Spiritual Life," by President Henry Churchill King; "Religion and Social Reform" and "New Theology Sermons," a companion volume to "The New Theology," by the Rev. R. J. Campbell; volume ii. of Edward Westmarck's "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas"; "Life in the Homeric Age," by Prof. Thomas Day Seymour; "Linguistic Development and Education," by Prof. M. V. O'Shea; "Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading," by Prof. Edmund B. Huey; "Pupil Self-government," by Bernard Cronsom; "Theories of Style," by Prof. Lane Cooper; "Educational Woodworking for School and Home," by Joseph C. Park; and "Economics for High Schools," by Prof. Frank W. Blackmar. The works of Byron, with a biographical sketch by the late Sir Leslie Stephen, will be added to the Globe Poets.

The Century Co. will issue this fall a new series of books made up of stories and sketches reprinted from *St. Nicholas*. There will be six of these books of adventure, travel, and description, the scenes laid in different sections of the United States; the books will be called: "Western Frontier Stories," "Stories of the Great Lakes," "Island Stories," "Stories of Strange Sights," "Sea Stories," and "Stories of the South."

The Baker & Taylor Company will publish soon the Memoirs of Frédéric Mistral and "The Story of Joseph"—the Joseph of the Old Testament—by George Alfred Williams.

Harper & Brothers are publishing immediately "In Wildest Africa," illustrated with many photographs by the author, C. G. Schillings; and "Discoveries in Everyday Europe," an illustrated volume of humorous sketches by Don C. Seitz.

Frederick McCormick, a war correspondent for the Associated Press, has written the story of the struggle between Russia and Japan as he saw it. The Outing Publishing Co. will issue the book under the title "The Tragedy of Russia in Pacific Asia."

The Burrows Brothers Company has just issued Dr. Bernard C. Steiner's Life and Correspondence of Dr. James McHenry, Secretary of War under Washington and Adams,