# The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later

### Art

ART FOR AMATEURS AND STU-DENTS, By GEORGE J. COX. Illustrated,

Doubleday, Page. 1926. \$5.

The author's brief survey of essentials in design and aesthetics is of a sustained and rather tedious breeziness, while his position is so eclectic as to be mercly confusing. His heart is evidently with the Modernists, but he is capable of admiring both Cotman and Cézanne, and he has passing qualmiover Matisse and Roualt. His picture of the past is engagingly simple; art was cranifed by the Renaissance until Cézanne et Cie. liberated it. The nineteenth century was a sink of triviality. Equally simple is the consideration of beauty. It consists in fine design. There is probably no more behind it than the will to design finely. Such easy tripping over great problems can hardly be edifying either to amateurs or students, and leaves an unfavorable impression.

But all this is really hors docuere. The real value of the book consists in the thirtysix big plates on which are grouped from two to nine examples of good, poorer, and worst design, often simplified to three tones for greater clearness. Each plate is ac-companied by an equal amount of text in which the æsthetic inferences are pungently drawn. The assortment of examples is at once broad and carefully chosen, covering all the arts and all periods to our own. These plates afford a telling series of concrete lessons in taste, simple enough for the beginner and instructive to the adept. Whoever looks through this material thoughtfully will not fail to learn much about quality in design. Naturally the commentary, usually just and searching, is occasionally open to challenge. To parallel a distortion by Archipenko in free sculpture with the superficially similar corner of a Gothic capital (plate XXIV) really tells us nothing either about the Russian or the cap. Similarly (on plate IX) were the author not holding a semi-brief for the Modernists, he would probably declare the Cézanne design both stilted and ununified. the Courbet quite obscure, and the Fantin one of the best on the page. But by definition Fantin is of those bad old times which were cramped by the Renaissance. Here the opinion of a reviewer who admittedly has been badly cramped by the Renaissance may not seem weighty. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the profitable experience of scanning these comparative plates, and to recommend them to others.

### ART THROUGH THE AGES. By HELEN GARDNER. With many illustrations. Harcourt, Brace. 1926.

A new general history of art naturally suggests comparison with Salamon Reinach's brilliant summary and Elie Faure's expansive rhapsodies. The present book occupies a middle ground both in size and character. It lacks the evolutionary march of the "Apollo" and also the warmth and color of Faure, but it has compensating merits of its own. It is clear, accurate, and admirably illustrated, and, though bulky, surprisingly light in the hand. The author's method is to express each period from a few carefully chosen monuments which are rather carefully analyzed. Thus the chapter on Romanesque architecture goes little beyond Sant Ambrogio at Milan and St. Etienne at Caen; the Gothic chapter is built around Chartres; Botticelli is represented by the Birth of Venus and one of the Dante drawings. The advantage of the plan, as avoiding mere enumerations and retaining a reasonable concreteness, is obvious. It also causes a certain discontinuity, as of a series of short essays. To remedy this, the author has provided each chapter with an historical introduction and a final summary, but on the whole the book gives no sufficient emphasis either to development or to artistic interrelations. This defect may somewhat limit its public. The private student will need a more continuous emphasis of the great movements. On the other hand we have here almost an ideal textbook for such general courses in the history of art as are given in many schools and colleges. It will tend to concretize them, leaving to the teacher his proper duty of coördination. Commendable features are practical bibliographies, and a summary but adequate survey of prehistoric, Negro, and Asiatic art.

## **Belles** Lettres

FORTY IMMORTALS. By BENJAMIN D1. CASSER1 4. New York: Joesph Lawren, 1926. \$3.50.

This, like all of De Casseres's, is an amazing book written by an amazing man. The fly-coaf gives the titles of five published works and of twelve "in preparation." On the jacket is "the world's opinion of De Casseres:" from Edgar Saltus-"De Caserros suggests a Titan in an inkstand;" from Romy de Gourmont-"De Casseres is the must firry and independent writer that I Steam of ," from Henry Tyrrell-"De Cass comparable to Poe and Whitman." We have also, in the volume itself, De Casopinion of De Casseres: "I partake die blood and brain and apocalyptic vision of Spinoza. Our ancestor-souls were Workson, where the inviolate one bechaos. We were root of the tree Your sile and shoot from its highermost terretation We were a single undimensional atoms in the eye of Brahma." Does Spin-24, one wonders, look down from his eterral acode and equally acknowledge the ance trul twinship?

the unifacity to Poe, at any rate, is e detectable in at least one respect. De Casseries . a mixture of genius and sheer fudge, although the proportions may not be exactly the same as in Poc. He is always essentially a poet, whether he writes in prose or verse,-a passionate, erratic poet, whose brain breeds images and epigrams like maggots, who revels in cataelysmic visions, and with wild fury strives to shake the foundations of the world. The clang of his staccato sentences is like a fire-alarm rung all night long. The tireless De Casseres keeps pounding on while the exhausted reader begs in vain for a moment's respite from the flare of epigram and metaphorcontinual challenge, brilliance, cleverness, sometimes over-reaching themselves,

Men are only men; but poets are poets. We are all created in the image of one

God: Tartuffe. Genius without pose is not genius.

Matter desired wings, and it invented Blake.

The human mind invented God; the human mind is privileged to kill Him whenever it pleases.

Do we wonder that in Jules Laforgue the adulterous relations of Sneer and Sob broke the bed of his brain? The soul of Jules Laforgue is become a

magnificent butterfly imprisoned in the center of an iceberg on the Moon.

De Casseres's philosophy derives from Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Jules de Gaultier whom he calls "the greatest of living thinkers," but he outdoes his masters in negation. The forty immortals—Nietzsche, Hardy, Blake, Shelley, Emerson, Poe, and the rest—are all called upon to demonstrate that truth is an illusion, morality is folly, and the self-sufficient individual is his own law. Reason is thrown into the discard. "Every belief is a vampire." Tradition is trampled on. Life is an irrational dream, a lawless adventure, a whooping spectacle. Hurrah for Life! De Casseres is an irrational dream, a lawless adventure, a whooping spectacle. Hurrah for De Casseres!

### Drama

THE GLEN IS MINE and THE LIFT-ING. By JOHN BRANDANE. Houghton Mifflin. 1926. \$2.

Dour Scotland is no longer dour. The frigid mask is softening into a smile. Inthe national Eye is turned to explore the national scene. Straightway, the local dramatists bestir themselves to mirror Scot foibles, Scot drollery, Scot peasant ways, hitherto celebrated in the national poetry with broad touches of caricature. Out of mists darkened by censorship and harsh Puritan prohibitions emerges what appears to be a genuine, native drama. Of the three who have achieved national reputation, John Brandane, long successful on the stage of the Scottish National Theatre Society, enters a bid for recognition outside the provincial circle whose centre is Glasgow. Unquestionably, the author has discovered the Hebrides. There is the unmistakable stamp of locale. Deftly he has caught the accent, the loamy, racy rhythms of the Scot speech akin to the Irish in extravagance. Compared to the soft melodious Irish-English made familiar by Celtic plays, the Scot idiom reads harsher, more guttural, less canorous though capable of wild, natural beauty in ecstatic passages.

Simple though controlled are the plotinventions of these two long plays. The hand of the maker pulls the strings with friendly purpose. In "The Glen Is Minc," sympathy for the lowly oppressed disturbs dramatic detachment. When greedy lairds of the new industrial order would trample the poor crofter (tenant) and desecrate the soil, when merciless wealth would corrupt peasant simplicity, the author in the guise of champion enters to outwit the knaves and reward humble merit.

In focal concentration of incident, "The Lifting," a wild tale of a rescue by brig, set amid stormy events of 1752, is theatrically effective. Emphasis shifts from character to event, and coincidence plays a large part. Originally written as a one-act piece named "The Change-House," the lengthened version, by an extravagant interplay of poignant and incredible surprises, weakens plausibility. But once under the spell of the Scot rhythm, the mixture of unreality and credibility, drollery and pathos, gloomy intensity and Scot pawkiness seems acceptable.

### Fiction

THE ALTAR OF THE LEGION. By FARNHAM BISHOP and ARTHUR GIL-CHRIST BRODEUR. Little, Brown. 1926. 52.

This is a conventional historical romance with an unconventional theme: a legend, as the authors describe it, of "the pride, the love, the gallantry of Roman Britannia." Familiar characters perform familiar actions. Warriors, in coats of mail, fight with javelins and swords, brave defenders repulsing the invaders of their land. The young, heroic leader of the home forces loves the beautiful young princess. The lovers and the remnant of their people are saved at the end from a cataclysmic disaster to continue the struggle between native and invader, between Briton and Saxon. The hero exaltedly discards his Roman ancestry, and vows to serve as a son the land that gave him birth. "We are Britons," he repeated, "and while a single Saxon lives on British soil, we will not abandon our Mother."

But if the old *clichés* of the historical romance—including tricks of language are much in evidence, quite unfamiliar and quite worth attention is the central legend. The disaster in the last chapter is nothing less than the storied submergence of Lyonesse, off the coast of Cornwall, by a tidal wave, succeeding an earthquake. Before the Normans came to England this legendary city, the Legionis Asa (Altar of the Legion) of the Roman soldiers and later the home of Tristram, had sunk beneath the waves.

Its columned porticoes and stately halls lie many fathoms deep, but its name lives on. Old fishermen still boast that when the sea is still, they can hear the church bells ring far down beneath the rippling keel.

"The Altar of the Legon," which deliberately leaves aside the Arthurian legends to imagine other adventures and other loves in the same period, seeks primarily to make visible once more this beautiful city lying hidden, if we may so believe, beneath the peaks of the Scilly Isles.

### THE LUCKY PRISONER. By COUNT GOBINEAU. Doubleday, Page. 1926. \$2.

"Les Aventures de Jean de la Tour-Miracle, surnommé le Prisonnier Chanceux," by Arthur de Gobineau, was first published in the winter of 1846, as a serial feature of a Paris journal. Gobineau was thirty at the time, and a newcomer from the provinces. This period romance is therefore contemporary with the early work of Dumas the younger, with his father's famous trinity of blusterers, with the best of Balzac, and, indeed, with all the prolific first generation of Gallie romanticism. It has been translated by F. M. Atkinson, and emerges, slightly stiff and antiquated, but nevertheless a sound piece of work, quite readable in this year 1926.

It is not, of course, an important part of Gobineau's untranslated literary remains. He called it a mere "bread-winner," and even among the novels of a man primarily a sociologist and reformer, it does not rank high. "L'Abbaye des Typhaines" and "Ternove" are superior in narrative interest and are more closely connected with the author's real concerns, but "Les Pléiades," a philosophical study which might not prove exciting reading now, is the only major work of Gobineau in the narrative form, a pendant to his great "Essai."

"The Lucky Prisoner" is a product of (Continued on next page)

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# The New Books Fiction

### (Continued from preceding page)

the author's researches, and is complicated in plot, filled with accessory historical personages, and written in a cramped prose which seems at first delightfully suitable to a sixteenth century subject. Through three hundred pages it becomes a burden and an affection, and only the attractions of Diane de Poitiers and the incredible escapes of the hero are compensation. It may be argued that the book as a whole is scarcely worth translating at this late date, but a comparison of Gobineau's story with any ordinary example of the school-and under the influence of Scott Europe provided a plethora of such examples-which has come down to us with greater fame, will not, I am sure, result unfavorably for this picture of Huguenot and Catholic at war. It has the advantage of being entirely correct in its political references and in its picturesque descriptions of costumes, amusements, and manners. In making Gobineau's name better known, one may doubt its efficacy, particularly as the publishers have chosen to conceal his identity in every possible way, lest the wary reader, given a clue to the age of "The Lucky Prisoner" might not agree with their claim that it is "one of the year's most thrilling books." Probably it is quite as attractive now as it was eighty years ago, for it belongs to a type of romance commanding a faithful and unchanging public.

#### RED SOIL. By L. E. GIELGUD. Doubleday, Page. 1926. \$2.

A powerful discord defeats the purpose of this thoroughly intelligent novel of Russia just after the outbreak of the Revolution. Against a strongly realistic background, it tells a story which, under the circumstances, is no doubt fairly plausible, but unquestionably not real. Though its melodrama is managed skilfully and it moves along at a swift and exciting pace, it reveals furtive proddings on the author's part to achieve the satisfactory outcome he desires. These proddings are faults in themselves, but only the cause for a much more significant fault, a genuinely artistic discord: the book demands a tragic ending it does not get, and the good luck that befalls the principal characters is a wretched contrast to the vivid tragedy of their surroundings.

The novel concerns a Russian village at the time Bolshevism is first gaining the upper hand among peasants and soldiers: a regiment mutinies against its commanding officers, aristocrats, and bourgeois; and the officers, together with a beautiful young countess and her father, have a very narrow escape from suffering brutal extinction. As a study of peasant Russia's state of mind on coming into power, of ignorance and stupidity and incompetence, of the factors which contributed to the general and selfimposed tragedy that befell the Russian masses, "Red Soil" is by no means negligible. As picture-painting, very bold and perhaps a little gloating in its desire for vividness and starkness-as a succession of scenes involving murder, crucifixion, massacre-"Red Soil" will arouse the most torpid reader. But as story goes, this one wherever it treats of the principals involved, is little if at all better than stagey and illmanipulated melodrama, offering a dénouement opposed to the very facts it reveals, and far too concessive toward a romantic tradition of story-telling to harmonize with its background.

# ADAM'S BREED. By RADCLYFFE HALL.

### THE GAME OF LOVE AND DEATH. By ROMAIN ROLLAND. Translated by Eleanor Stimson Brooks. Holt. 1926 \$1.75.

Mrs. Brooks has here given us a spirited translation of the best and most recent of the dramas in Romain Rolland's still unfinished cycle of the French Revolution. Of its predecessors, "The Wolves," and "Danton" have had a powerful effect in Germany, Russia, Japan, and other nations which are not, like the United States, immune to international fervor. This "Polyptich in twelve panels" when completed will cover the entire course of the Revolution from its inception to the death of Robespierre and the return of peace. M. Rolland's theory of history is in harmony with the recent tendency to substitute the conception of recurrent patterns for the older notion of linear progress.

The artistic power of the drama of history is less in what it has been than in what it is always. . . . They are the eternally "reborn," these human elements, unceasingly reappearing under the thousand and one veils of Proteus, which for me form the value and the attraction of history. More than the individuals of a day, whose faces have been devoured by the earth of the grave, they are the Forces who have chosen their dwelling in these bodies and, since then, have taken up their abode in others.

"The Game of Love and Death" is played in the latter days of the Revolution coincident with Robespierre's rise to power. The immediate dramatic struggle lies between the old Jérôme de Courvoisier, philosopher and hero of science, the man of reason, whose character, M. Rolland states, is based upon that of the great Condorcet, and the much younger Claude Vallée, proscribed Girondin deputy, the man of passion. Sophie Courvoisier's young wife, is the prize. Around them, threatening always to engulf, surge the waves of the Revolution. It is Vallée who at the beginning seems to have won love and lost life, it is Courvoisier at the end. The values of the characters and what they represent are fully tested in the action of the play. "The Game of Love and Death" is good philosophy and it is good drama.

#### SHEPHERD EASTON'S DAUGHTER. By MARY J. H. SKRINE. Longman's, Green. 1926. \$2.

This is a pastoral religious novel, the heroine of which happens to be a saint. If the author had ever in the course of the book tried to prove that Dorcas Easton was a sweet, wholesome girl at heart like all other girls, the book would quickly have fallen into the category of religious ruck. But this is just what the author does net do. She says instead—Dorcas Easton is a saint; there are few saints; how is it that a saint comes to be and is. And so because Dorcas from the start is not quite like other people, we accept her and come perhaps to understand.

Her background is as important as her life, for without it she could never be. To see with Dorcas one must somehow realize that it was her ancestress with whom Wesley prayed and with whom he left his Bible; that it was her great-grandmother who, baby in arms, stood in the same house and preached like a man. Tenderhearted mystic that she is, having the gifts of healing and of faith, what wonder that she should strongly bend her great gift to service and to the alleviation of suffering? Thus it comes about that Dorcas goes to live in a most evil-seeming place in Factory End. There she nurses the mad and the sinful, holds the sick child that the ritualistic literal young rector christens, casts out devils, preaches to the men. And with it all she grows in suffering, simplicity, and faith. But either because it is in the nature of saints to suffer or because the world is an evil place, Dorcas meets much of the reality of evil. Finally Factory End is closed and the people out of work and homeless turn against their benefactress. This is the story-or some of it. There is really much more. The important thing is that Dorcas, the stranger, the saint, becomes a human being honest and interesting and alive. This is largely due to the author's care that we shall see Dorcas through many eyes. So, in spite of her goodness, in spite of her almost too perfect and too wise parents, in spite of the general beneficence and well-meaning nature of the countryside and of the Creator, that is taken for granted, in spite, finally, of well chosen adjectives that flood the whole--it is a book which, taken whatever way you will, has been put together with intelligence. It is never altogether convincing (it is too romantic for that), it is not strictly true,—but it is highly readable.

# Miscellaneous

THE NEW COMMON SENSE IN THE HOUSEHOLD. By MARION HARLAND. Revised by Christine Terhune Her-RICK. Stokes. 1926. \$2.

Thousands of women of mature years will avow their debt of gratitude to Mrs. Harland, whose "Common Sense in the Household" guided their cooking in the early period of housekeeping and remained a useful adjunct even when their own increasing knowledge no longer constantly required a reference book. Few cook books are the peers of this one which manages to present variety and excellence in happy conjunction with the demands of economy, and which in addition to its recipes contains much useful information on the equipment of the kitchen and the serving of meals. In its revised form Mrs. Harland's manual retains all the admirable features of the original version and adds to them a table of calories and daily menus with calory values, and instructions in the use of electrical cooking apparatus not yet manufactured at the time of Mrs. Harland's writing. Any woman who invests in this volume is assured of an excellent handbook.

#### CATALOGUE OF PORTRAITS IN THE POSSESSION OF THE UNIVERSITY, COLLEGES, CITY AND COUNTY OF OXFORD. By MRS. REGINALD LANE POOLE. Vols. II and III. Oxford University Press. 1926.

Having dispatched the portraits belonging to the University, City, and County of Oxford in Volume I, Mrs. Poole completes her great task in two more volumes devoted to the collections in the colleges. The task has been done extraordinarily well. Mrs. Poole has not only been resolute in locating all the portraits, no easy matter, for many are in the private lodgings of college officials, but has also followed biographical leads towards unknown or neglected painters. She has even listed many interesting seventeenth century portraits in glass which had been entirely overlooked. Whether for a layman or a minute historian of art the ten score excellent cuts afford agreeable browsing. Here are extraordinary early portraits of Swinburne and Lord Rosebery looking every inch of the part of genius. Here peaceably together are John Locke and Cardinal Newman. In short the book is a graphic epitome of Oxford's greatness, as for its scruplous care in compilation and exhaustive indexing it is a model among catalogues. In clearness of a somewhat elaborate typography it is worthy of the best traditions of the Clarendon Press.

### THE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM. By CHARLES R. RICHARDS. Illustrated. Macmillan. 1920.

Supported by a grant from the General Education Board, Mr. Richards, presents an instructive survey of the chief industrial museums of Europe, notably those at Paris, London, Berlin, Munich, Vienna, and Budapest. These are very recent and vigorous institutions. The Musée des Arts et des Métiers, to be sure, was founded by the Revolutionary Republic and occupies an old convent. The rest are relatively of yesterday and mostly occupy post-war buildings. The reader may well ask why he should go to a museum to learn how his clothes, shoes, stationery, and motor car are The answer is that his education made, should include a knowledge of the fundamental industries of his times, while under modern conditions he cannot acquire that knowledge except at a museum. Up to the factory era and subdivision of labor, an observant walk of a couple of miles would have reasonably informed anyone as to the methods of the basic industries. They were conducted in the fields or with open doors on the streets. Now it would require a tour of scores of miles over months under expert guidance to gain an equivalent information. The practical substitute for such a tour is a few visits to a well organized industrial museum. Good management, as Mr. Richards has observed it, consists in a very careful selection and arrangement of exhibits, in especial devices, as electric motors to actuate models at will, and even more in an intelligent and aggressive policy of direct instruction. They do these things notably well in Germany and Austria where the school children are required to visit such museums under guidance, and often are given prizes for good written reports of their observations. While the book with its account of methods of exhibition and tables of staff organization is primarily for the specialist, it is written in a clear and interesting way which will attract the predisposed layman.

### THE ADVENTUROUS BOWMEN. By SAXTON POPE. Putnam. 1926.

For most readers the conventional African big-game story has become a trifle tame. The lions charge in the same old way and are met by the same old blast of artillery. Lesser beasts of the veldt are slaughtered in untold quantity. A few gunbearers get chewed up by some impolite carnifora. And then all the mighty hunters come back to America to present their trophies to the local museum of natural history.

To this conventional scheme Mr. Pope has added a variation which makes the whole almost new and rather interesting. He and his fellow Californians have revived the old English long-bow, and after vanquishing all possible game in the New World decide to go to Africa and try their weapons on worthier targets.

They are moderately successful. They get a certain number of lions, and seem to have little difficulty in killing most other game. The reader will enjoy all this, but when he finishes, he'll probably wish there hadn't been so much heavy artillery around the camp. Of course we didn't expect Mr. Pope or anyone else to face a lion armed only with a bow and arrow. We merely hoped he was going to.

# Travel

### BLACK HAITI. By BLAIR NILES. Putnams. 1925. \$3.50.

The reader of this latest Niles book will finish it comforted by Plato's reminder that: "The same man is nowhere at all, when he enters into rivalry with madmen." For within three hundred and eighteen pages the author relates astonishing things. And the worst of it is, they are true.

Mere assassination is nothing in this strange, alluring book. One almost expects an accompaniment of music. We see black Christophe, proud of his title of Henry I, chained to his throne by paralysis, and in despair ending it all by a silver bullet. And a King, eager to display the marvelous discipline of his army, orders some of his men to march off the edge of the roof! Black butterflies float in the perfumed sunlight. Head hunters dance. Drums, flutes, and calabash chorus weirdly in our ears, while ruins "of indefinable majesty, as though they had once been the expression of some human dream" rise before our eyes.

Napoleon's sister, lovely Pauline, stands in a silk-hung room, murmuring: ". . . our last moments. Let us pass them in joy." Meanwhile her "small, delicate" husband writes "desperately, feverishly" that "terror alone remains, terror I employ-." We see a dead King being lowered, uncoffined, in a great vat of quick lime which happened to have been prepared by workmen for quite another purpose. But there is no time for anything better befitting a King! And the vignettist shows us the King's executioner, "a big, bare-foot, bearded negro with a brutal face," and the book-seller "he is cold, this tall thin old man with the sensitive, aristocratic, finely chiselled Caucasian features, the brown skin and the long grey beard; a Tagore of a man, or a prophet walked just that minute out of the Old Testament." While for good measure, there is the poet who loved Haiti, humanity, and especially loved . . . la volupté. This fellow contemplates the graceful and undulating forms of the halfclad women; . . . the hips which bend and curve and arch; . . . the . . . calves of the women's legs" as they glisten, wet and shining, in the sun. For he is a lover

Doubleday, Page. 1926. \$2.50.

A curious book with a mixed theme, Miss Radelyffe Hall's "Adam's Breed" is the first example of her work to appear on this side of the Atlantic. A certain melodramatic power is at once evident in her rich and violent prose, and a more than ordinary ability to create character. But it may be doubted that the life story of Gian-Luca, an Italian waiter in London, is an entirely successful performance. Much of the restaurant background is well done, and the analyses of his reactions to the war, his marriage, and the scenes of his childhood are often effective and sincere, though lacking in restraint. The actual flaw in the author's program is evident, however, when Gian-Luca takes to religion seriously, abandons his profession for a wandering life in the woods, and dies of starvation. The portrait, hitherto pleasing enough, is obviously insufficiently penetrating to make such an ending credible. The perfect waiter of the author's imagination and her modern St. Francis could not, by any metamorphosis, be the same flesh and blood.

of the poetry of the flesh.

It seems hardly likely that there will be readers who prefer a more solid book on Haiti, for already we have almost enough of such books as catalogue incidents, and furnish harsh history. There are altogether too few who are aware that as Anatole France said: "History is an Art and should be written with imagination."

# Brief Mention

THE tide of travel still flows heavily toward Europe, and books for the journeyer continue to appear in numbers. Among the most recent of them is a new edition of Frances M. Gostling's "The Lure of English Cathedrals" (McBride: \$2.50 net), a companionable vade mecum, the purpose of which is to assemble history and legend rather than to furnish scholarly architectural comment. Miss Gostling begins in the South with Canterbury and works up to Lichfield, embroidering her