MR. HOWELLS'S NEW BOOK

A CRITICISM OF ITALIAN POETRY.

MODERN ITALIAN POETS. Essays and Versions by W. D. HOWELLS. With portraits. 12mo, pp. 369. Harper & Brothers.

Mr. Howells has done the reading public a real service in publishing this volume of studies of modern Italian poets. The general subject is one information concerning which is scant and hard to come at, in the first place, and in the second it is a distinct privilege to be introduced to a line of foreign poets by a critic who has himself climbed the steeps of Parnassus, and whose taste and skill enable him to set before us versions of the poetry he interprets such as few if any of his contemporaries could compass. He has, moreover, contrived to present the poets of modern Italy in the most interesting way possible, and while this may grow naturally out of the circumstances governing their song, its significance might not have been so clearly exhibited by a person less keen of observation or less sympathetic. The peculiarity of the Italian poetry of the last century, as shown by Mr. Howells, is its relation to the national conditions. It is, indeed, open to any one to contend that their environment influenced and inspired these poets, and in one sense this view is incontestable. But from a general observation of the times it might easily be concluded that the spirit of freedom moved in their hearts before it had began to disturb the coarser sensibilities of the people, and that the agitation which gradually extended over all Italy, passing from province to province and from dukedom to dukedom, originated in the impulse given thus to patriotism and discontent.

However that may be, it is evident, as Mr. Howells points out, that one note dominates the poetry of the century preceding Italian unification and enfranchisement. It is interesting to trace the growth of this patriotic note. Mr. Howells goes back to the time of the Academies of Arcadia for the beginnings of this movement. Beyond that period it would have been equally futile and unedifying to push the quest. It was the lowest depth of intellectual stagnation throughout the country. Liberty there was none, and there was little virtue or social force of any kind. Patriotism seemed extinct. The masses were sunk in apathy, the aristocracy in frivolity. No better gauge of the existing state of things can be had than the eagerness with which the educated classes threw themselves into the silly inanities represented by the establishment everywhere of the Arcadian Academies. These were assemblies or associations for the fostering and dissemination of the most puerile, pithless, artificial and graceless forms of verse, whose popularity only attested the decline of intellectual vigor and national life. The affectations and follies of the English Euphuists cannot be compared with them, for the Euphuists never were in England more than a passing eccentricity, and they were laughed at even while they flourished. In Italy the Arcadian Academies embraced all that survived of the poetic spirit, and yet, so low may national understanding fall without suffering irreparably, the darkest hour in this case was that which preceded dawn.

Just how or why the stifling stupidities of the Arcadians were broken in upon by verse holding in solution some genuine manliness of thought, some regret and shame for the degradation of the country, it is perhaps not possible to set forth in detail. But by degrees a new light began to spread, and it had penetrated the darkness but a little way when the Italian people realized the virtue and meaning of the change and sprang with enthusiasm toward the illuminating forces. Then Italian poetry became part and parcel of the slow but ceaseless movement toward freedom and unity. It was a political force, and one of the most precious, despite the rigor of the repression which compelled every rhymester to cloak his meaning, to speak in parables and allegories, to express his hatred for living tyrants by cursing the dead tyrants of antiquity. No doubt in the strongest verse of the Italian poets of that period there is a coldness and harshness which form a strange contrast to the honeyed nothings of the preceding century; but poets who are patriots cannot be expected to put the means before the end, or to voice the passion which rends their souls in soft and flowing phrases. Mr. Howells gives several translations from Alfieri, deprecatingly. They are so good—so very much better than Bowring's version, which is the only English one extant—as to suggest the hope that the author of "Modern Italian Poets" may be led to undertake the whole of Alfieri's tragedies. The great poet has not yet been interpreted. Bowring's version of his plays, though faithful in a wooden way, conveys no idea of the fire and fervor which inform them. Mr. Howells himself thinks Alfieri hard, and so he is; but what intensity, what depth of passion, there is in his best work. Both Manzoni and Niccolini excel him in the creation of character. His people are not plastic. They resemble the figures of Greek tragedy, which were rather embodiments of passions than human creatures, complex, many-sided, feeble and mutable. In the rigid classic form affected by Alfieri, wherein adherence to the unities crowded the action into inexpressibly brief space of time, this supernatural energy and oneness of character does not detract from the general effect. On the contrary, it increases it. Thus in the Orestes the sweep and energy of the action, the tremendous dominancy of the great passions represented, the sombre thoroughness of all the people in their destined parts, seem to carry the drama above the demands of consistency and fidelity to common life. We are made to feel that it belongs to quite another category, that it is beyond ordinary dramatic criticism, and that however little it resembles mundane experiences it is great with the mysterious grandeur of a vanished legendary world.

Mr. Howells has given examples of all the eighteen poets represented in this volume, and it may fairly be concluded that in each case he has selected those verses which possess most general and abiding interest. It is one of the conditions of poetry serving political purposes that its interest should be evanescent, and that after a time it should become obscure and even pointless. The satire of Parini does occasionally possess abiding value in its presentation of the manners and foibles of the time, but the political verse of nearly all the Italian poets, though exercising when written a powerful influence upon public opinion, is seldom of a kind to appeal to another generation. It follows from this that a selection such as Mr. Howells has made is really better fitted to attract attention and excite interest than a more ambitious and fuller rendering would. We have here in one modest volume what may be justly considered the pick and choice of a great quantity of verses, by far the most of which have ceased to be interesting. The dramas of Alfieri, Manzoni and Niccolini are not to be included in this judgment, however. They are works of art which can and will be admired and appreciated in all times. There is also an Italian poet whose verse and mood separate him from his fellows. Giacomo Leopardi was no doubt a patriot, but he was first and most a pessimist, and his poetry is chiefly interesting as the manifestation of a mind hopelessly at odds with its environment. Mr. Howells confesses himself puzzled by Leopardi's reputation, which certainly appears beyond the merit of his verse. It is true that his prose writings account for much of it, but the most celebrated of them, the Dialogues, are chiefly remarkable for their morbidness. Leopardi had a fine mind and a wretched physical constitution. His circumstances were never very pleasant, but neither were they such as would have chronically depressed a healthy man. His pessimism differs from that of most other Philosophers of the Shadow, as they may be called, in that it has no light or relief whatever. Schopenhauer's pessimism was purely intellectual. Personally he enjoyed life as a healthy vigorous man in easy circumstances might be expected to. Leopardi, however, was thoroughly in earnest in his despairing views because from his outlook life was actually not worth living. It held but one consolation for him, namely, study, and his physical condition was such that often for months together he was unable to open a book or even to think. It must be said too that his poetry partakes of the defects of his physique. It is wanting in vitality. It is too full of complaining languor. It is the expression of a sick soul in a sick body. And this is not less visible in his prose than in his verse. There is very little originality in his Dialogues. They are morbid, gloomy, surly, cynical, but never trenchant or really deep. It is quite possible that his reputation was created merely by the element of strangeness and perversity in his poetry and prose alike, but it was never possible that such a writer should found a school, and it is not probable that his fame will endure. He will always be a subject for pity, but he will presently live in literature only as a unique illustration of fatally handicapped genius. Mr. Howells gives brief and graphic accounts of the Italian poets. He concludes that they have done their work, that the national spirit which inspired them has ceased to demand stimulating verse, and that consequently Italian poetry has now fallen into the same decadence which marks the poetry of most other countries. We need not be surprised to be told by him that Realism is the note of the present and the destined character of the future. That is a question concerning which differing opinions are entertained, and it does not call for discussion here. It is enough to be satisfied that he has done this gallery of poets excellently well: that he has succeeded in giving interest to things not always inherently attractive; that he has enabled the general public to obtain a knowledge of modern Italian poetry which they could have acquired in no other way; and that he has enriched American literature by a great deal of delicate, discriminating, candid and sympathetic criticism.

THREE NEW STORIES.

THE WORK OF AMERICAN WRITERS.

THE ROSE OF PARADISE. By HOWARD PYLE. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 231. Harper & Brothers.
LOVE AND THEOLOGY. By CELIA PARKER WOOLLEY. 12mo, pp. 439. Boston: Ticknor & Co.
JACK, THE FISHERMAN. By ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS. With illustrations by C. W. REED. Square 12mo, pp. 59. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The "Rose of Paradise" is a sea tale of the eighteenth century, patterned upon Mr. Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island," apparently, though in no way an imitation of the latter. It may, perhaps, be said to be "founded on fact," for the principal incident is a fight between an East Indiaman and two pirates, the outlines of which are taken from Johnson's "Lives of the Pirates." Mr. Pyle has done his work creditably. The quaint and formal language of the period is reproduced and with no little skill and consistency. The title is taken from an immense ruby, the transfer of which from a Malagasy native chief to the East India Company as payment for certain favors is the centre about which the action revolves. Captain John Mackra, the commander of the Indiaman Cassandra, tells the story. There is a traitor on his ship, a passenger named Captain Leach, who, when the vessel lies becalmed in the harbor of Juanne, and the great ruby has just been put on board, communicates with Edward England, the pirate captain, and arranges for the attack on the Cassandra. The fight, the loss of the ship, the escape of the crew and passengers, the theft of the Rose of Paradise, and all the subsequent events, ending in the strange recovery of the gem, are told with spirit. The fault of the book, however, is its brevity and bareness. The narrator never pauses to explain or describe anything fully. The simplest indications are given, and there is apparent a kind of hurry and impatience to get to the end, which is not in harmony with the literary spirit of the eighteenth century. Mr. Pyle should have remembered that in those days leisurely and exhaustive description was the rule. Take Defoe for an example. His stories without exception are most minute and finished in detail. They tell everything at length. They account for everything. They do not hurry over even unimportant accessories. And this is what gives them their wonderful air of lifelikeness. Mr. Pyle has not considered this enough. He has rattled his sea captain through a most eventful career at a pace which is altogether modern. Mr. Stevenson knows better how to imitate the eighteenth century. He puts in plenty of details, dwells upon every step in his stories, and rounds them out in the approved eighteenth century manner. The "Rose of Paardise" is decidedly a good story and briskly told. It does the author credit as an experiment, but it is easy to see how it could have been greatly improved. It is very fairly illustrated.

In "Love and Theology" Miss Celia Parker Woolley deals with one of those social problems which freedom of thought and the prevalence of the new philosophy have in the present day given fresh prominence to. A young man studying for the ministry is engaged to a girl brought up in the old school of orthodoxy. In the course of his studies he encounters causes of doubt. He pursues his researches until he finds himself no longer able to accept the old creed. Knowing the fulness and fixity of his sweetheart's faith, he shrinks from informing her of the great change his theological views have undergone. When at last he summons courage to tell her that he cannot enter the ministry as he had proposed, she is shocked and horrified, and though she loves him sincerely, insists upon breaking their engagement. He goes to the West and accepts a call to the pastorate of a very liberal church indeed. The account of this church, its congregation, ceremonial and manner of pulpit ministry is one of the best things in the book. The doctrines taught, if they can be so called, are of the vaguest and most indeterminate. In fact the society is rather a "school for ethical culture" than a church. The most active member is the old judge whose family life is represented as charming, and who exhibits all the Christian virtues while professing agnosticism. Arthur Forbes, the young radical preacher, makes his mark in this peculiar community, and meantime Rachel, his lost love, is discovering that what she has thought the path of duty is a very thorny one. She is unable to put Arthur out of her heart, and she is unhappy, though upborne by the unconsciously egoistic feeling that she must be right in her determination. There is another love affair in the story, in which a robust-minded Episcopal clergyman and a fascinating but flighty young woman of the "emancipated" type, figure, and this too is well told. Few recent novels, in fact, have been marked by clearer discrimination of character and more consistent development, while the various types are thoroughly natural and modern. Of course where two young people are really and deeply in love a solvent for even the most formidable difficulties is at work on behalf of their reunion, and therefore it is not surprising that Rachel's mind should presently be opened to perceive a possibility of salvation for Arthur. The reaction once begun naturally goes on, and so she is led to realize that even without renouncing her faith she may lawfully join hands with her dear apostate. The whole story is very brightly and cleverly written, and though considerably beyond the length of the average novel it is interesting from beginning to end.

"Jack the Fisherman," a story of Fairharbor, is a study of inherited alcoholism. Jack is a fisherman's son, born of a good mother and a drunken father. He comes into the world fatally handicapped by the paternal weakness. At twelve years of age he is brought home dead drunk by his playmates. He is one of those drinkers who have long intervals of sobriety and then plunge into wild excesses. In one of his sober spells he meets and falls in love with a poor pretty girl who has gone wrong. He offers to marry her, and she swears fidelity to him and keeps her vow to the end. They have children, of whom nearly all die. Their life is hard after a time. He is away fishing much, does not always earn enough to keep them comfortably, and by degrees slips back into his old drinking habits. After a considerable absence he returns and hears some man on the quay mention his wife's name lightly. Without stopping to make any inquiry he flies into a deadly rage, drinks himself into a state of frenzy, goes home and murders the poor girl, who has done no wrong. Then, without knowing what the end of his brutality has been, he goes and ships for another cruise and is away several weeks. On the return of the vessel just as she is entering the harbor, an outgoing fisherman informs them that a tug is waiting with the sheriff on board to arrest Jack for murder. When this is made known to him and he realizes that he has killed his wife, the murderer springs overboard and is drowned. It is a simple, touching story, told with power and feeling. The illustrations are good.

MINOR POETRY.

GOOD, BAD AND INDIFFERENT.

COLONIAL BALLADS, SONNETS AND OTHER VERSE. By MARGARET J. PRESTON. 16mo, pp. 259. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
THE SAILING OF KING OLAF AND OTHER POEMS. By ALICE WILLIAMS BROTHERTON. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co.
A BRANCH OF MAY. By LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE. pp. 42. Baltimore: Cushings & Bailey.
THE POEMS OF GIACOMO LEOPARDI. Translated by FREDERICK TOWNSEND. Pp. 171. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
SOCIETY VERSE BY AMERICAN WRITERS. Selected by ERNEST DE LANCY PIERSON. 16mo, pp. 145. Benjamin & Bell.
DIALECT BALLADS. By CHARLES FOLLEN ADAMS. Illustrated by "Boz." 12mo, pp. 136. Harper & Brothers.
NEW VERSES FROM THE HARVARD ADVOCATE. 1876-1886. Privately printed by KILLMAN TOMPKINS: New-York.
SONGS OF HISTORY. By HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH. 12mo, pp. 183. Boston: New-England Publishing Company.
THE UNSEEN KING AND OTHER POEMS. By CAROLINE LESLIE FIELD. 16mo, pp. 76. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
HALLO, MY FANCY! By CHARLES HENRY LUDERS and S. D. S., jr. 16mo, pp. 96. Philadelphia: David McKay.

Margaret Preston has a good ear for rhythm and a graceful fancy. Her verse is epical and she writes spirited ballads with the skill which simulates spontaneity. The poems in this volume which will most please the general reader are of this kind. Her colonial ballads illustrate various episodes in that early period of American history the picturesqueness of which doubtless owes not a little to its antiquity. There are, however, more serious essays. The author has experimented much with the sonnet, and has produced some meritorious verses in that measure. But story-telling in verse is her forte, and there she wins the most decided successes. Not that any of her verse is really inferior. It is all the product of a cultivated imagination and a refined intelligence, and if it may not claim the first rank it deserves a prominent place in the second.

The poems of Alice Williams Brotherton, to which "King Olaf" gives the title, are varied and interesting. The majority are narrative and dialogue poems and these display considerable graphic power and sense of harmony. When the subject lies ready at hand the poet deals with it skilfully, but in what may more correctly be styled the original verses there is a certain thinness of thought which, though not peculiar to this author, is too familiar a mark of the minor poetry of the day to escape notice. The poems, long and short, are usually rhymed neatly. In many there is some pathos. In none of them is there the deep, restless, questioning spirit which is the surest evidence of the true poetic genius. The kind of verse which Mrs. Brotherton writes is smooth, often graceful, not seldom interesting; but after all it is the poetry of mediocrity.

It is rather odd, but the idea of a jealous woman meditating the use of poison to remove a favored rival occurred to Mrs. Brotherton, and to Lizette Woodworth Reese, and before either of them began to write, to Robert Browning. Whether if the latter had not employed the subject these ladies would have thought of it, is of course an insoluble mystery. Perhaps the notion of getting rid of a rival is what Dr. Carpenter would have called a "fixed idea" with most women, though latent in the minds of most. The verses of Mrs. or Miss Reese are not ill-polished. They show a strong feeling for natural beauties and a mild tendency toward that amative vein which touches upon what "my love and I" would, could, might or should have done or said or thought or felt. There is a very large stock of this kind of verse abroad in the world already. Perhaps it is hardly worth while to add to it causelessly.

A translation of the poems of Giacomo Leopardi has been made by the late Frederick Thompson, and it is a work to be welcomed, though considering the temperament of the Italian, not joyously. A more unhappy, biassed, jaundiced soul than Leopardi's never was incarnated, probably. Poor James Thomson, who wrote the "City of Dreadful Night," was the only modern to whom he can be compared. He lived a short life of almost unrelieved gloom and misery. Cursed with a deformed and sickly frame which made existence a ceaseless torment, doubly cursed by a spirit so sensitive that it fairly withered under crosses ordinary men would have thought nothing of, it was inevitable that having genius he should express it pessimistically. His poems, even when filtered by translation, are anything but cheerful. He found all barren from Dan to Beersheba. He could not gaze at the moon without speculating upon her misery in toiling over one monotonous round to alleternity. His utterance is a continual cry of pain; a protest against life. Assuredly for him it was not worth living, and there can be no doubt that he welcomed the end more sincerely than anything in the career. For all this his poems deserve to be read, and the present translation is faithful enough to convey their meaning fully.

Mr. Pierson explains in a prefatory note to his "Society Verse" that he "has only attempted in this collection to present the best productions of the younger school of poets and poetesses, whose work still possesses the charm of novelty, and is worthy of being preserved." While many of the verses are taken from various periodicals "a number of excellent pieces (says Mr. Pierson) are here published for the first time." Forty-three authors are represented in the volume, and the selection appears to have been made in the main with discrimination. Of course there will always be disagreements as to what should and should not be included in such a volume, but taking into consideration the modest character of the venture, it would perhaps have been difficult to bring together a much fairer or more truly representative gathering of small poets.

The author of "Yawcob Strauss" has published another little volume of the same kind of dialect verse, much of it dealing with the further adventures of "Yawcob," or employing him as the medium whereby some homely moral is inculcated. Mr. Adams does not pretend to be a poet. He is a clever versifier, and his dialect, if not as correct as that of Mr. Leland, is quite faithful enough to the Teuto-American way of talking to satisfy the public and to produce the desired effect. The verses are not all dialect, and those which are not show that the author can be effective and even touching when he chooses, without the aid of broken or bad English. Between "Hans Breitmann" and "Yawcob Strauss" there is certainly a great deal of difference, but each is good in its way, and the latter deserves general approval, seeing how he has helped a not too merry world to some genuine and hearty laughter.

The second series of verses from "The Harvard Advocate" constitutes a collection of poems which the university has no reason to be ashamed of. The standard, indeed, is exceptionally high, and there are few poems in the volume which are not marked by some clear indication of ability. The verses are of the most varied kinds, but, as is fitting in the songs of young men, joyousness and delight in life are the preponderating influences. There are plenty of society verses and imitations of the old French measures which Austin Dobson has employed so gracefully. Among these there are a few which Dobson himself might have been glad to acknowledge. Here and there a graver note is heard, but the prevailing key is blithe and merry. Plenty of graceful little amorous poems find place in the collection. More than one name is seen on the list of authors which has already become familiar to far larger audiences. Professor Peabody does not, indeed, overstate the case in the preface in saying: "In a volume like this, published ten years ago, are the early poems of some men who have already won a large and enviable reputation, of which that book contains the authentic prophecy. Like prophecy will be found in the volume now given to the public, redolent of such genius, wit and poetic inspiration as in their fair flowering give promise of a rich heritage and abundant fruitage in coming years." If the early promise were always or often justification for expecting the "abundant fruitage in coming years," these new Harvard verses might warrant the belief that a brighter era in American poetry was about to open. But how many of the clever youngsters whose hands have been put to these capital verses will, five years after leaving college, have maintained their intimacy with the Muses? "The world is too much with us," as Wordsworth has it, and if it makes keen business men, strong financiers and bold projectors out of our college boys, it too generally shakes all the poetry out of them. Let us hope, however, with Professor Peabody, that the present "promise of a rich heritage" may be kept.

Mr. Butterworth has collected many of his poems from the periodicals in which they originally appeared, "in answer to a request that he would compile the verses he had written on subjects connected with American history, a request made in the hope that such a book might prove useful to the teacher, the family and the school." Doubtless the memory is specially stimulated by poetry, and historical events so embodied almost always are more thoroughly assimilated than those learned by prose narration. It is, however, desirable, if not necessary, that the poetry so used shall be spirited and enlivening, and in the verses before us there is something to be desired in this respect. Nor are Mr. Butterworth's historical facts in every case quite as carefully verified as could be wished. The glorification of Whitman, for example, is curiously out of harmony with Mr. Bancroft's account of that pioneer's career, and on the whole Mr. Bancroft is to be trusted. Nevertheless there are in the present volume a number of "Cameos of American History" which may be commended and recommended for the purpose of instruction and the generation of intelligent patriotism. There are also several sets of verses made to commemorate various American festivals, and of these not a few have been arranged for music.

There are very few pages in Caroline Leslie Field's book, but quite enough to prove that she has the divine gift of poetry. The poem which gives the title to the volume "The Unseen King," is a story in blank verse, the subject being the conversion of the Jews from idolatry through the influence and example of a virtuous monarch. It is a picturesque conception strongly executed. Of the shorter poems there are several which exhibit that tenderest of all feminine poetic feeling which springs from maternal emotion, while in others a love of nature and a pleasant grace of expression are apparent. At times the verse rises nobly, too, as in lines to a friend at fourscore. A devout and trusting Christian spirit breathes through all these verses and their tone is lofty and pure.

A quotation from William Cleland explains the title of the little volume of society verse written by two Philadelphians, Charles Henry Luders and S. D. S., jr. The poems of Mr. Luders are somewhat sober and a little sad, while his colleague writes always lightly and merrily. Many of the verses have appeared already in newspapers and magazines, and the readers of *Life* will recognize some of the best of them. The kind of verse is indeed not the highest, but it is one which appears to suit modern tastes better than more ambitious and more serious strains, and there can be no question that greater success has been attained in it than in the latter. The volume before us is a very creditable example of a graceful facility which is yet uncommon enough to be welcomed cordially.

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A REGULAR BAD 'UN.

From Good Words.

I.

Yes, Sammy's a sad 'un,
A radical, he;
A regular bad 'un,
As ever you see.
His riot and tearing
And banging about
Is really past bearing—
It's wearing me out.
And rambling and roaming,
And larks in the lane—
Your cleaning and combing
Is labor in vain.
And as for his pinner—
It's ruin, I vow;
Clean on for his dinner—
And look at it now!
And scrubbing the tiles, ma'am,
And dusting the things,
It ain't worth your whiles, ma'am,
For mud as he brings.
And growing, and poking
His toes through his shoes!
Without any joking
We ought to be Jews.
Whatever's unlawful—
Oil, blacking or ink—
I tell you it's awful
The things as he'll drink.
Then lost, and run over,
And choking, and fights—
My life ain't no clover,
A-getting such frights.
It's mischief and shindy
Week, Sunday and all—
That hole in the windy
Was him and his ball.
And then there's his dad, ma'am,
A-taking his part,
And spoiling the lad, ma'am,
With toffy and tart.
No use now—not any—
A-climbing my knees!
And axing a penny!
Hear that, if you please!
You're allus a-stuffin'
And spoiling your tea;
No penny, you ruffin,
No penny from me.
It's a rod I'll be buying—
I'm sober, I am;—
I've set him off crying!
Ah, mother's pet lamb!
Look here now! What's this, lad?
Then give me a kiss, lad—
My own little Sam!

II.

A change in the house, ma'am—
A sad 'un—you'll find;
All still as a mouse, ma'am;
I'll draw up the blind.
No, no! I ain't fretting—
He doeth all well!
But, as for forgetting—
Ah, mothers can tell!
Yes, these is my riches,
My jewels and gold—
The jacket and breeches
I made him of old.
I brush 'em and air 'em,
And lay 'em out right,
As though he would wear 'em
O' Saturday night.
But no little Sammy
Come running anen,
A-calling out, "Mammy,
Just look at 'em on!"
When the housework is ending,
Tow'rds three of the clock,
I still sit a-mending
Some little gray sock.
And sometimes—through thirsting
And longing so sore—
I hear him come bursting
And banging the door,
And jump up to hold him,
And feed on his smiles—
Oh, how could I scold him
For soiling the tiles!
All the gold ever minted
I'll gladly give o'er
To see his foot printed
In mud on the floor.
There's the bed where I laid him,
My precious, at night,
And the quilt as I made him,
So cosey and light.
And now as he's lying
Down under the mould,
I'm waking and crying
A-thinking he's cold.
I know as its blindness—
Rebellious I am;
The Shepherd in kindness
Has folded His lamb.
But oh; how I miss him,
And hunger to kiss him,
My own little Sam!

—[FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

THE REAL WOMAN.

From The Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

There is a subtle element entering into the relations of the sexes which men rarely perceive. It is somewhat difficult to describe, but in a rough way may be stated thus: Women have an entity of their own involving distinctive ideas, tastes, feelings and even a programme of life; they recognize it among themselves, value it and respect it. Men so little take this into account that even the most chivalrous men consciously or unconsciously regard woman as a sort of "annex" to a man, graceful and lovable it may be, but still chiefly important as identified with man, his comforts, passions or ambitions. It is a revival of the times when woman was universally considered as an inferior being. In certain lands she was even denied the possession of a soul. The modern man has recovered from this brutal idiocy, but he has things yet to learn, and one of them is that the emancipated sex has a mental and moral life of its own which may and does blend with that of men, but which has its own special "form and pressure," and which women, both in private communings and in their social relations with their own sex, esteem of as much value as the thoughts, aims and activities of their masculine compeers. When a man gets an insight of this phase of woman's mind and career, and treats it with sense and consideration, he will find woman nearer and dearer to him than ever, and he will be greatly improved himself. It will open up a new field of intellectual experience and aid him in mind, manners and the pursuit of happiness.

FIVE O'CLOCK TEA IN LONDON.

London Correspondence San Francisco Argonaut.

The talk which goes on at the average 5 o'clock tea is usually of neither a brilliant nor strikingly intellectual character. Young English ladies and gentlemen, as they run in good society nowadays, don't come out strong as cultured conversationalists. They know more about hunting, shooting, cricket, tennis, horses and dogs than they do of history or literature. They are totally and utterly unacquainted with Shakespeare, except so far as he is known to be the author of one or two of the plays which Henry Irving and Ellen Terry have been playing at the Lyceum. Dickens they are generally very hazy about, and never quote. Thackeray they consider and call a snob, without in the least knowing why or being able to tell you. Nine-tenths of them would perhaps have never heard of him at all had not Lord Beaconsfield taken him for one of his prototypes in "Endymion." That called attention to him, and made people inquire who he was. As for the old people, they are not much better. Their stock-in-trade is gossip and detraction, flavored with servants, whether in club, smoking-room, or Belgravian boudoir. Their manners are considerably better than those of the young 'uns, but mentally they don't soar a whit higher. I remember once speaking to an old lady of over seventy, a lady with a title to her name, and withal the daughter of an earl, about Shakespeare. I got a long series of "ohs," "yes's?" and "really's," at regular intervals in response to my remarks, until I stopped with "Don't you think so?" and waited for a reply.

"I really don't know anything about Shakespeare," she said, without a blush. "My father forbade myself and my sisters to read him when I was a girl. He didn't think him fit for girls to read."

Poor Shakespeare! I don't suppose any one ever heard of her father, the earl.

"But why didn't you read him after you became a woman and married?"

She shook her head.

"Oh, dear no. I shouldn't think of going against my father's advice even now."

And now just here, a bit of 5 o'clock-tea "conversation"—I suppose I must call it so—as a fairish sample of the bulk.

"Awfully jolly place, Homburg."

"Ya-as. Tommy's over there, isn't he?"

"But I say, didn't you say you were going to shoot at the Breechloaders' on the first?"

"No. Goin' with Bartie Paget for a cruise in his yacht."

"How awfully jolly. Where?"

"D'no. Somewhere on the coast of Germany. Germany's got a coast, hasn't it?"

"Going to hunt this season, of course?"

"Oh, dear, no. I have sold the darling Polo."

"What! Sold Polo! Never!"

"Have really. Tommy Beauclerc gave me seventy guineas for her. Fact is she's been fired twice, don't you know, and that, etc., etc., etc."

"She was an awfully jolly mare. So fit."

"Besides I want a new habit, and papa says he can't afford to give me one. I haven't a farthing of my last quarter's allowance left. Lost every ha' penny at Sandown."

"By-the-bye. They say they're going to alter the rules of tennis; abolish faults and backhanders."

"Rubbish! Better abolish the game altogether."

"So say I. And—oh, look here. Seen Barkley Villiers lately? No! I thought not" (a quizzical expression with eye-glass up).

"Why, what do you mean?"

"He's booked it. Jews got too hot for him."

"I always thought he'd come to grief after that wretched marriage of his. Fancy! She hadn't a farthing. A clergyman's daughter with a couple of dozen brothers, and most of 'em in debt."

"I met Talbot—you know Percy Talbot, of the Blues—the other day, and he was praising the gal's beauty. Haw-haw! Said she was an awfully good gal, too. Haw-haw!"

"What! Good without a farthing! Much use in that, I should say. Percy always was an ass."

"Is that the gal the Prince admired at Goodwood? It is! No, thanks, no sugar."

"Have some cow!" From the funny man.)

"Thanks, no cream."

"Cream! Calves' brains." (From the ditto.)

"No cream and sugar! Why, that's the way they drink tea out in Java or Cyprus, where the tea comes from, don't you know. So Charley Vereker, of the Bays, told me. He's just come back from there."

"That reminds me. I'm so awfully disgusted with my maid Townsley. Just fancy. She won't drink anything but Java—no, Japan tea. I think it's Japan. And I give her beer money, too."

"Shameful! I should give her warning at once."

"Did you [pronounced *yew*] hear Booby Travers is up a tree? Had to leave the Grenadiers—ruined at Monte Carlo. Wasn't anything for him to do but go out to New-York at once."

"What for? A cattle ranche at Tchick-ah-go?"

"No. Yankee heiress. I saw him the day he left, and he said: 'Some good in the trumpery title after all, old boy. It's only Honorable, but it's good for half a million dollars at the very least.' Sharp chap, Bobby."

"Oh, Major Brabazon, I've got the sweetest Yorkshire terrier coming to me from my Uncle George. Such a darling."

"Really? Thought you only cared for turnspits."

"You mean *dachshunds*, I dessay. Oh, dear no, I much prefer collies."

"My sister, Louisa, has a Danish boarhound that sleeps on the foot of her bed. Imagine that. He stands four feet high and weighs 170 pounds."

"The dear!"

"Fine beast!"

"Going to Lady Jampot's to-night?"

"No; we're not asked."

"Oh!"

THE JERSEY.

Paris Correspondence London Truth.

I expressed, some weeks ago, my fondness for the jersey, and my hope that all persons of the worthy sex who know that they have fine figures, or fear that they are too lumpy for gracefulness, will go on patronizing it. I am glad to find that the Grand Duchess Vladimir thinks as I do. Her feeling on the subject is that the jersey is the highest effort of the dressmaking art. She has it thin, and she has it thick, with a plushy inside; she has it low. Of the low kind I have this week been shown a specimen. It is in salmon silk. The upper edge is trimmed with a ruche of ravelled silk set on an elastic band, which is fastened on at short distances. Nothing can be softer or more fluffy. One would think that with the first zephyr the whole thing would fly off like thistle down, which in texture it resembles. There are no sleeves, but the ruche forms a shoulder band, and a pair of downy tassels fall from the middle of this part. The meagre-chested should not wear the low jersey; but the plump, or too plump, should adopt and cling to it obstinately. What, you see, is so objectionable to modest persons in a ball-room, is not the stripping of busts, but the forcing up of roundness toward the neck. That frontier line which Miss Rose Cleveland spoke of in her letter about low-cut waists, and which, unfortunately, she did not define, is displaced in the sense of upheaval. This is done, not by the corset, if it be at all well made, but by the corsage. A jersey, low or high, forces nothing, and lends itself to every undulation. For this reason the stout and unstatuelike should wear it both in and out of the ball-room. The jersey does not require, either, much room in a trunk, and the trimming destined for the upper edge may be put on and taken off at will, and kept in a little card-board box. This lessens impediments when one is going on visits to great country houses. The low jersey is charming with a short and full skirt of the texture worn by members of the corps de ballet, and it does as well with a long skirt made to mould the figure, and to fall into a train.

SHE WANTED SOME FLOWERS.

From The Boston Courier.

A lady living in the suburbs was called down the other morning to see a young girl who asked for her at the door but declined to enter the house. The lady recognized the caller as a girl she had frequently seen in the neighborhood, but of whose name she was ignorant.

The girl looked hurriedly up and then bashfully cast down her eyes to the doormat, which she nervously prodded with the toe of her coarse boot.

"Got any flowers?" she demanded with a manner which seemed gruff, but which was probably only frightened.

"Yes, a few," was the reply.

"Got any flowers?"

"Not many. Why?"

"Cause Mis' Purington wants some."

"Who is Mrs. Purington?"

"She's the widow woman what lived in the red house at the end of Back Alley."

"What sort of flowers does she want?" inquired the lady, utterly at a loss to know why Mrs. Purington, the widow who dwelt in the red house at the end of Back Alley, should send to demand flowers from a perfect stranger.

"I dunno," answered the girl, more sullenly than before.

"But what is she going to do with them?" persisted the puzzled lady.

"I dunno," repeated the caller. "She's dead, an' she wants some flowers."

And the pathetic situation having thus become clear at length, the lady sent to the departed widow who would dwell no more in the red house at the end of Back Alley whatever blossoms the frost had spared in her little garden.

THE SULTAN AT PRAYER.

From The Charleston News and Courier.

The Sultan stands erect with his face to the east and his feet on his praying carpet, and placing the thumbs of each hand under each ear, he spreads his hands like wings, lifting his ears upward as if to catch any sound from Heaven, and with his hands in this position must turn first to the right and spit, then to the left, and then dropping his hands to his side hold them rigid while he bends his knee and then his whole body forward from his knees until his forehead touches the floor three times. He repeats his prayer in this position and gets upon his feet again without touching his hands to the floor, and again makes wings of his ears and again spits right and left and his prayer is over. Every Turk believes that he has two attendant spirits, one good and one evil, and as he is not sure which side the emissary of Satan has pre-empted he spits at both to make sure.

NOTES ON CURRENT ART.

NEW PAINTINGS AND PRINTS.

The value of an "art gallery" as an advertisement is being thoroughly tested in many different branches of trade. Unfortunately, however, the dry-goods and jewelry shops which are beginning to tempt custom by means of "galleries" are only following an example set long since by barrooms and chop houses. So long as the artists make no complaint of such disposition of their work the only objection must be based on sentiment, provided, of course, that the pictures are decent; and any feeling that French artists may have on the subject has not yet overcome their affection for the American dollar. Bougereau was depicted as in a "state of mind" a few years since because one of his paintings was used to increase the receipts of an American bar; but Bougereau's pictures continue to come to the American market, and nothing has been heard of any attempt by him to make it a condition of sale that they should not be used as advertisements. As for Munkacsy, nobody has expected excessive scrupulousness from him on this point, and Constant has probably suffered no severe annoyance. The artist's control of his work is of course limited to the first purchaser, but the fact that no effort for such control is made even in the first instance seems to indicate that in many French *ateliers* American appreciation is measured only in American dollars.

That the public receive much serious benefit from this "popularization of art" is hardly probable. Aside from the regular stock of nudities the pictures chosen for this purpose are naturally designed simply to gratify a popular taste for paintings of an anecdotical, humorous, horrible or "realistic" character, realism in this usage meaning the most literal imitation. There is a huge painting now on exhibition in a jewelry shop in this city which is to be understood only after the reading of a circular or pamphlet or a lengthy verbal explanation. In other words, the picture represents an attempt to usurp the function of literature, and it is not necessary to be a reader of Lessing to comprehend that a distinction exists between the office of literature and that of art. A picture should make its appeal at once, and if a picture requires explanations, then the artist has failed in his art. At the same time there are a great many people who delight in picking out pictorial characters with the aid of the printed page and in piecing together bit by bit a story told on canvas. The picture referred to, a painting by Makoffski, representing a Russian Czar choosing a bride, involves an elaborate story, and this, together with a certain semi-barbarous richness of color, is deemed likely to enlist popular interest. It is well enough to remember that pictures may be a means of confusion instead of a means of "spreading a knowledge of art." The multiplication of "art galleries" is not an unmixed good, but it is likely to continue for a time, and the importation of pictures in bond "for exhibition only" may assume large proportions now that the example has been set by the managers of a "popular resort" in this city. They took their cue from the American Art Association, which has imported two or three collections of pictures in bond, something which had not been done in just this way before in this city, although under the present law there have been several examples of similar importation. All that the law really requires is articles of incorporation and an imposing name. The "New-York Society for the Promotion of Art" meets these requirements, and the "members" who are the managers referred to are therefore able to supplement their "regular attractions" with collections of paintings imported in bond. They are doing the same thing that the American Art Association did and they are equally justified. It is said that the proprietor of an uptown auction-room has also organized his firm into an "association." There is no reason why tailors, dressmakers or what not should not form incorporated "associations" with spread-eagle names and import paintings by the hundred, thus presenting the pleasing spectacle of art and industry walking hand in hand throughout our city.

The print lovers of the city are to be further indebted to the Buccleugh sale, which has already furnished the costliest etchings ever seen in this country. Messrs. Wunderlich & Co. privately exhibited certain admirable impressions of Rembrandt last week, several of which were purchased at the Buccleugh sale. The freshness of the bur in the "St. Francis Praying" and the "Sportsman" and the fullness of the color contrasts in such admirable examples of the much-in-little as the "View of Amsterdam" and "Village with Canal" are ready indications of the earliness and fine quality of the impressions. Of other prints seen too hastily for thorough discussion mention may be made of a brilliant impression of "The Three Trees," a first state of the "Jason and Creusa," and excellent impressions of the larger plates, "Ecce Homo," "The Crucifixion" and "The Cross," together with examples of Durer and Raimondi, which are impressions of sterling merit.

The "Architectural League" announces that "it has instituted in connection with its exhibition an annual competition open to all draughtsmen in the United States under the age of twenty-five, the object being the promotion of good design and the improvement of draughtsmanship." Gold and silver medals are offered as first and second prizes. In the first competition the subject is a "memorial clock and bell tower on a village green." The drawings submitted must be delivered before December 5 to Mr. Charles I. Berg, No. 152 Fifth-ave. He is the secretary of the league and will furnish any desired information.

The autumn term of the Brooklyn Art Guild was opened at No. 201 Montague-st. on October 3, and it is announced that the classes are well filled and a prosperous season is promised under the direction of Messrs. W. M. Chase and W. R. Derrick. The active membership of the "guild" is limited to artists and art students, members of the life and portrait classes. The school was founded "for the purpose of furnishing in Brooklyn a thorough course of instruction in drawing, painting and modelling, at the lowest rates consistent with the support of the school."

The first statue of the poet Longfellow will be erected in his birthplace, Portland, Me. The sculptor to whom the commission was given by a memorial association formed in Portland soon after the poet's death, was Mr. Franklin Simmons, a native of Maine, who, unfortunately for his art, has elected to spend the greater part of his professional life in Italy. The clay model, which has just been finished in Rome, will be put into bronze within the next six months, and the statue will probably be unveiled in Portland in the late spring. An account of the statue in a very eulogistic vein which recently appeared in the *Paris American Register* contains the following: "The poet is represented in a sitting attitude, the right arm resting in an easy position on the back of a richly carved and ornamented chair, while the other is thrown carelessly forward on his lap, and loosely holding a mass of manuscript. The ample folds of a cloak falling from the shoulders sweep around and cover the knees in a manner that is at once natural and graceful, as an example of artistic composition. The space beneath the chair is broken by some stray volumes that serve alike to fill a vacancy and to form a suggestive adjunct of a minor nature. The head, leonine almost in the flowing locks so characteristic of the man, is inclined slightly forward in a thoughtful way, and is expressive of modest and dignified intellectuality as its prevailing sentiment. The height of the figure, if standing, would be ten feet, and the pedestal upon which it is to rest is to be about eleven feet in elevation."

The paintings at the Chicago Exposition, especially those lent by Mr. George I. Seney, appear to have attracted unusual attention. *The Chicago Tribune* enlivens discussion of the collection by the following tale apropos of Dannat's "A Sacristy in Aragon": "Two visitors were held yesterday as by a vise while looking at the well-known picture by Dannat. One said to the other, who held the catalogue: 'Oh, look at the big fat priest! What do they call this?' The other hunted it up in the catalogue; and, deceived by the trick eyes sometimes play in an involuntary transposition of letters she replied: 'A Scarcity in Aragon.' Both were profoundly puzzled; but, believing as many do that one who perceives the significance of a picture without titulation is incapable of grasping its hidden meaning, they proceeded to scour the canvas for a clew to the title as they understood it. At last the jug appeared to their vision; and one said triumphantly to her companion in a hoarse but joyful whisper: 'It's the jug! It's empty, you know.'"

The same journal furnishes another anecdote not to be taken as reflecting upon Chicago's "culture": "'Mamma,' said a young lady, just home from school and gazing upon Alexander Harrison's 'Open Sea,' 'is this an oil painting or a water color?' 'Sh,' answered her mother, with a look of surprise and chagrin. 'It's a water color. Don't you see the water?'"