SEA POWER IN HISTORY.

SUGGESTIONS FOR AMERICANS.

THE INFLUENCE OF SEA POWER UPON HISTORY, 1660-1783. By Captain A. T. Mahan, United States Navy. 8vo, pp. xxiv, 557. Boston: Little, Brown & Company.

Captain Mahan has undertaken a work which has long needed doing, though it is easy enough to see why it has not been done before. The influence of sea power upon history is a study which could only commend itself in the first instance to a seaman, for the historian of land movements as a rule neither comprehends nor appreciates the incidence of naval action. But sailors are seldom writers, and perhaps still less frequently do they take those large and comprehensive surveys which can alone demonstrate the full significance of sea power. Naval historians, as Captain Mahan justly observes, "have troubled themselves little about the connection between general history and their own particular topic, limiting themselves generally to the duty of simple chroniclers of naval occurrences." And he is probably right in the assertion that there is not any work "that professes the particular object here sought, namely, an estimate of the effect of sea power upon the course of history and the prosperity of nations." What he aims at is thus expressed: "As other histories deal with the wars, politics, social and economical conditions of countries, touching upon maritime matters only incidentally and generally unsympathetically, so the present work aims at putting maritime interests in the foreground, without divorcing them, however, from their surroundings of cause and effect in general history, but seeking to show how they modified the latter and were modified by them. The period embraced is from 1660, when the sailing-ship era, with its distinctive features, had fairly begun, to 1783, the end of the American Revolution." Though the choice of the period selected may appear to have been somewhat arbitrary, and though the fixing of the conclusion prior to the Napoleonic wars excludes the most important and influential examples of the exercise of sea power to be found in history, Captain Mahan has found sufficient excuse for discussing the great actions of Jervis and Nelson, and has thus utilized for his main purpose the lessons of the period directly following that which alone he attempts to chronicle.

At the first glance the student of history will no doubt be tempted to suspect undue magnification of the influence of sea power, as the natural effect of professional pride on the part of the author. Such an apprehension, however, would wrong Captain Mahan, whose work throughout is sober, restrained, exact and logical in its conclusions. The feature which distinguishes it from other histories is its full recognition and clear appreciation of a factor in all history which has heretofore failed to receive anything like due attention. But the importance of such a study allies it with the future as well as with the past. Naval experiences are not, Captain Mahan contends, without value any more because of the changes of modern times in ship architecture, armor, weapons and methods of defence and attack. "It is doubly necessary," he says, "thus to study critically the history and experience of naval warfare in the days of sailing ships, because while these will be found to afford lessons of present application and value, steam navies have as yet made no history which can be quoted as decisive in its teaching. Of the one we have much experimental knowledge; of the other practically none." Modern views regarding the naval warfare of the future, the author considers, must be received with much hesitation and allowance. They are at best only presumptive, and in fact nobody knows how any of the latest devices will turn out in actual service. Some very confidently held opinions have indeed been so discredited even by the imperfect tests possible in naval sham battles that they may have to be abandoned. The future, therefore, is the unknown, and it is not justifiable to assert that the past in naval warfare can have no value.

Certain questions will always be of prime importance in connection with naval war. Among these are "the proper formation of the navy in the war, its true objective, the point or points upon which it should be concentrated, the establishment of depots of coal and supplies, the maintenance of communication between these depots and the home base, the military value of commerce-destroying as a decisive or secondary operation of war, the system upon which commerce-destroying can be most efficiently conducted, whether by scattered cruisers or by holding in force some vital centre through which commercial shipping must pass. All these are strategic questions, and upon all these history has a great deal to say." Captain Mahan in two preliminary chapters analyzes the elements of sea power carefully and thoroughly. The most pregnant example, of course, is that of England, and historical comparisons from French and Spanish and Dutch records illustrate the development of the British Navy impressively. The naval policies of the European Powers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries afford most interesting and suggestive material, and bear out the author's contentions strikingly. Louis Fourteenth Captain Mahan holds, might at one point in his reign have made France a great sea power. This was Colbert's aim and ambition. He revived the navy and infused new life into it. But when Louis determined to put all his strength upon war by land he signed the doom of the country as a sea power, for by the adoption of this policy he not only paralyzed French naval progress, but proportionately stimulated that of his rival, England.

The examination of the evolution of sea power involves a recapitulation of the history of the French, Spanish, English and Dutch wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with a view to demonstrate the importance of naval action all through these struggles. Captain Mahan conducts his task with admirable impartiality and sobriety. With politics he has little to do; with ethics, national and international, nothing. He does not pause to moralize over the greed of this country, or the want of stamina of that one, but confines himself to the facts and their obvious inferences. There is thus a distinct fascination in viewing the course of development of sea power, and in watching the effect of blunders, disasters, negligences and over-confidence in checking or hastening the process of evolution. In one respect only should we feel at all inclined to question Captain Mahan's extremely ingenious deductions. He has perhaps put too little weight upon the influence of national character in the production of some of the momentous changes noted. Does not the deterioration of Spanish character, for instance, play as important a part in the decline of her sea power as the mistakes of her rulers? Does not the Dutch parsimony in like manner deserve to be treated as a grave factor in the decay of Holland's maritime strength? We know that during the reign of Charles the Second the navy of England swiftly retrograded, until it became incapable, not only of holding the Channel, but of keeping a bold enemy out of the Thames. But this was a question of ships and supplies rather than of men. So, too, in the case of the French navy, Captain Mahan lays great stress upon the fact that the orders from the Government generally, if not always, were to assume the defensive, and to lose as few ships as possible. It may easily be perceived that a service so controlled would before long become demoralized, and this undoubtedly happened; but is it not also true that the English possessed an aptitude for the sea which was not paralleled on the other side of the Channel?

Yet it is beyond question that the difference between the traditional French and English naval policies had much to do with bringing about the results actually seen. The English rule was always to take the offensive. The French rule was always to take the defensive. Captain Mahan demonstrates in an exhaustive argument, that the French were the first to evolve what may be called scientific tactics in naval battles. In the hands of their best seamen, such men as Suffren, these refinements were turned to good account, but the general results of the defensive policy were certainly not such as to justify its retention. The English practice was to bear down upon the enemy stem on. Necessarily this order exposed the assailant to the broadside fire of his opponent for some time before he could use his own guns effectively; and by the theory the defensive side ought to have been in the most advantageous position. But in fact the headlong attack of the English Navy, when carried out in due concert, most often succeeded in breaking the order of the enemy, and it does not yet appear that this mode of attack has been discredited by modern inventions and changes or by the substitution of steam for canvas. What Captain Mahan brings out most clearly, however, in the course of his researches, is the immense superiority which her persistence and generally harmonious development of a single policy gave to England's sea power. While France and Spain conducted their wars for the greater part on land, only spasmodically attempting to hold their own upon the ocean, England, made independent of continental attacks by her geographical position, was left free to bestow undivided attention upon the development of maritime commerce and colonies.

For, and this is a most vital consideration, as Captain Mahan proves, no country can hope to build up a great sea power without a strong navy, and no country can maintain a strong navy without an extensive merchant marine. Here, then, is a lesson for the United States which is seriously enforced by the author, and he connects with it a second point of capital consequence also, namely, the absolute necessity, and especially to a modern navy, of coal and supply depots in many parts of the world. Without these extended operations must fail. Bailli Suffren, in the Indian Ocean, succeeded in maintaining himself for six months without a depot of any kind. Every port within reach was closed to him, and though constantly fighting, for a long time he had nowhere to go to refit after an action. But what a great captain could do in the days of sailing-ships could not be repeated at present. Had Bailli Suffren commanded a squadron of modern ironclads he would have been compelled to run for the Isle of France after his first action, for he would have been short of coal. The modern navy depends upon the bunkers far more than upon the magazines, and no great sea power can now exist without abundant, well-placed and easily defended depots. Captain Mahan thinks that the American people may take warning from the fate of the Dutch, whose passion for economy was so great that the United Provinces refused to make the necessary appropriations for maintaining the fleet until an enemy was almost upon their seaboard; and he warns them that in the end of the nineteenth century it takes much more time to prepare for war than it did during the seventeenth. On the policy of making war by commerce-destroyers alone Captain Mahan is emphatic. He disapproves such a course, and adduces many illustrations in support of his position.

It is impossible to do more than indicate the character and scope of Captain Mahan's valuable and lucidly written work. The questions which it discusses are of grave importance to the people of the United States in many ways, and their dispassionate treatment by a naval officer of distinction should cause more serious attention to be paid to them. The vindication of the functions and uses of the sea power is thorough, and the new lights thrown upon a number of historical situations through the change of view-point give a freshness to the old matter necessarily introduced which practically reconstructs it. The accounts of the naval battles and slighter engagements are carefully illustrated by diagrams so simply arranged that the veriest landlubber should find no difficulty in apprehending them. The author's critical commentaries are valuable and penetrating, and will no doubt give rise in some instances to professional controversy. No statement is hazarded, however, without deliberation, and the distinguishing characteristic of the book is its fulness of information and solidity of judgment. The conception of the work was original. Its execution has been extremely able. It is an honor to the author and to the United States Navy, he so well represents, and it must be received everywhere as a most important and seasonable contribution to history from a direction hitherto virtually unexplored.

RENAN'S NEW-OLD BOOK.

A YOUNG MAN'S OPINIONS.

L'AVENIR DE LA SCIENCE. Par Ernest Renan. 8vo, pp. xx., 541. Paris: Calmann Levy. New-York: F. W. Christern.

Forty years ago M. Renan, then a young man just entering upon his intellectual career, wrote, with all the positiveness and dogmatism of youth, a book which the good advice of his friends caused him to withhold from publication. They thought it too heavy and solid, and not authoritative enough to overcome those defects. It would repel the public and lie heavily upon the reputation of the author, who, in France of all countries, could not afford to be considered a dull, tedious writer. After forty years M. Renan gives this book to the world, and in a preface whose style and matter equally reveal the distance he has traversed during that period he states his reasons for so dealing with a work the faults of which no one sees more clearly than himself. M. Renan has reached the conclusion that if he did not destroy the manuscript somebody would be sure to publish it after his death. He could not, however, bring himself to destroy it, because, with all its crudities, it indicated a tolerably just prescience; because many of its forecasts have been realized; and because it still seems to him that the lines of progress are in the directions marked out so long ago. Whether these considerations are enough to justify the preservation of the book is a question which the reader must answer for himself. We have found the book full of interest, not so much for what it is as for what it foreshadows. It contains all the germs of of M. Renan's mature intellect, in fact, and his progress from these beginnings can be traced with perfect ease by all who are familiar with his later work.

The preface is in itself a delightful essay, and certainly by a writer who retains little to remind one of the youth who composed the body of the book. The latter is an elaborate glorification of science, and at the same time a funeral oration over the grave of theology. Some would say the grave of religion, but that would not be fair to M. Renan the younger, whose contention it was that science was itself truly faith, and that the defenders of theology were themselves the sceptics and atheists. In his view the future of science was the future of humanity. In 1848 the revolutionary sentiment of 1789 still hummed and buzzed in the ears of the young philosopher, and with the ardor, intolerance and confidence of youth, it seemed to him quite unnecessary, while pulling down all barriers to scientific progress, to create any substitutes for the things and beliefs destroyed. Science, he thought, would be all-sufficing. It would more than fill the gap made by the elimination of "superstition." It would console and fortify no less than enlighten the world. Forty years of study and experience have greatly modified this arrogance of adolescence, and now in his preface he confesses: "I must say it frankly, I cannot imagine how, without the old dreams, it will be possible to relay the courses of a noble and happy life. The theory that the truly wise man will be he who, refusing to look far ahead, restrains his perspective within the circle of material pleasures—this theory, I say, is absolutely repulsive." All that he can suggest to-day is that "Science will always remain the satisfaction of the highest desire of our nature, namely, curiosity." But here there is a woful begging of the question, together with an assumption which cannot be admitted.

M. Renan is not an irreligious man, though he may have been the cause of irreligion in others. The quest of truth has been the fixed purpose of his life, and his views of science include elements of poetry, imagination and reverence which differentiate him sharply from the Positivist school, all of whose intellectual methods are, as may be plainly perceived, alien from his sympathies. In truth, he is no more able to live without the aid and comfort of "dreams" than are his most orthodox neighbors; only the dreams upon which he battens must have the "cachet" of science; must seem to be classifiable with those excursions of the "scientific imagination" which are so entirely distinct from unscientific products of fancy. M. Renan does not even feel comfortable in the refuge of the "Unknowable." He finds it necessary to his happiness to hold that there is no Unknowable; that, however bounded may be the province of Science to-day, a time will come for the dissipation of the last cloud that conceals the secret of the universe. M. Renan is not to be labelled a Deist, though he is certainly a believer in a Supreme Being, to deny whose existence would, in his view, be most unscientific. But he will not be hampered by definitions, and while this leaves his creed vague and elastic, it secures free play for that vivid and poetic imagination which constitutes so great a charm in his writings.

When he wrote "L'Avenir de la Science" he was only twenty-five, and his style was unformed, while his convictions were far too strong and sweeping to be true. Age has mellowed and perfected his style, and softened and modified his judgments. He would not now venture to write such a book as this, and it is even somewhat singular that he should have been content to let it go forth with all its imperfections on its head. It is only great geniuses who can avoid in youthful productions that exhibition of absolute assurance and infallible omniscience which the judicious reader regards with amused indulgence at best. But perhaps M. Renan's reluctance to sacrifice his juvenile production may be explained by the circumstance that even after the lapse of forty years he remains much more sanguine as to the successful establishment of his ideas than the facts appear to warrant. The truth is that the world has by no means reconciled itself to the elimination of the spiritual from intellectual life. The struggle is not only unfinished; it has scarcely begun. Nor has M. Renan at any stage of his career appeared to realize how important a factor temperament is in the settlement of this great question. Those who rely wholly upon reason in matters of this kind have always been wrong in their anticipations through having neglected this consideration. They have failed to realize, as M. Renan fails to realize, that there is such a thing as innate preposition to the spiritual or to the material view of life, and that mere argument can never change views which derive their support from heredity and peculiar mental constitution. To some it is given to see life in one way; to others the point of view is wholly different, and between these fundamentally distinct views there can be no reconciliation.

The spiritual aspect being the higher, once given that the course of humanity is upward, it follows inevitably that every theory which involves the disappearance of the spiritual must be unscientific and erroneous. Spiritual views may change, but they will continue to be spiritual views. Material views are also and even more mutable, but the tendency in them is toward greater spirituality, not to greater materialism. It is impossible to conceive of a generally instructed and intelligent world resting satisfied in a crass materialism. If it is to advance, it must become less earthy, not more so. Moreover the search after truth must always reveal the fallacy of talking about "reality" as though it were concrete and definable. The very doctrine of the relativity of all knowledge shatters the foundations of materialism and exposes the illusive nature of its terminology and reasoning. M. Renan appears never to have grasped this, and therefore the surprising crudeness of much in his early work has escaped his observation, or at least worn a much less objectionable aspect than it must do to others. In any case the book is far too long for its present importance, and it is so behind the times in most respects that only enthusiasts can be expected to master its voluminous pages. It is interesting in the ways here pointed out, but it is, after all, the work of a Renan whom we do not know, and who, had he not grown immensely, would never have risen above mediocrity.

TOLSTOI'S "KREUTZER SONATA."

A MORBID, COARSE AND GROSS VIEW OF LIFE.

THE KREUTZER SONATA. By Count Leo Tolstoi. Translated by Benjamin R. Tucker. 16mo, pp. 146. Boston: Benjamin R. Tucker.

The strange psychological experiences through which Count Leo Tolstoi has been passing ever since he gave up the pursuit of sane and simple literature and plunged into mysticism with the ardor and enthusiasm not merely of a neophyte, but of a discoverer, have led him to expressions of an equally phenomenal character. It was his fortune to read the New Testament when past middle age; and, as he took up the study of it without other preparation than a familiarity with the vague and crude ideas of the Nihilists, it is hardly surprising that he created for himself some peculiar readings and applications. In all he has written from this new point of view, however, the most characteristic feature has been ignorance of everything essential to religious and social criticism. For anything manifest to the contrary in his later books, Count Tolstoi might have dropped upon our little earth from some distant planet. Human development, history, experience, are alike unknown to him, or he treats them as though they had no significance or instructive uses. He would pass a sponge over the whole Christian era, and begin again at the beginning. Certainly Count Tolstoi thus exposes himself to the charge of overweening assurance, though perhaps it may really be an excess of modesty which troubles him, for shy people often rush to extremes to conceal their temperamental diffidence. In his didactic books he has arraigned civilization, and at least convinced himself that riches are wrong, that progress is a snare, that rude muscular labor is the ideal state of life, that literature is a delusion, that non-combatism is the true rule of conduct, and that government of any kind is anti-Christian. One might think these sweeping propositions quite enough to occupy the attention of the most ambitious reformer, but Count Tolstoi is not content with the scope of his programme, and in "The Kreutzer Sonata" he has made another long step—we can hardly say forward, but at all events in advance of his former demands.

The oddity of this book is that it appears to aim at a union between two utterly incompatible things—namely, Christianity and the Pessimism of Schopenhauer. If we judge by the writer's insistence upon the German philosopher's main doctrine, we shall be warranted in concluding that Count Tolstoi has worked his way out of Christianity as rapidly as he worked his way into it. But, though his argument taken as a whole implicitly traverses the Christian creed, nowhere does he in terms express the least change of view regarding the older faith. On the contrary, he appears to have reached the conclusion that Schopenhauer is really a Christian reformer. The whole argument is, indeed, presented in a bizarre way. The scene opens in a railway carriage, where a conversation is going on about marriage, its conditions and obligations. This is broken into by an excited stranger, who speaks bitterly of the institution, and who presently reveals himself as a man but recently on trial for the murder of his wife. This acquitted uxoricide falls into talk with the narrator, and, the carriage being by this time empty, save for these two, unbosoms himself of his awful experiences, and in the course of his relation develops the theories which the author unquestionably intends to put forward as his own.

Whoever has read Schopenhauer's essay on "The Metaphysics of the Love of the Sexes" will recognize in "The Kreutzer Sonata" many familiar acquaintances, though he may think them not improved by the costume with which the Russian adapter has endued them. In fact, the basis of the argument here advanced is a coarsely expressed contention that sensualism underlies marriage, and the corollary of Count Tolstoi is that in order to bring about the pure and perfect union of souls, what Schopenhauer calls "the denial of the will to live" must be cultivated until it controls human action. Of course the sequence of this is the extinction of the race; and at this point Count Tolstoi joins hands heartily with Schopenhauer, though it is quite apparent that he has not reached the goal by the same path. Despair of modern civilization and of human potentialities generally has supervened in his case upon discovery of the futility of his own schemes of regeneration. Perhaps it is natural for a neglected philosopher to turn about and curse the stolid, stupid world which will none of his wisdom; but it must be admitted that the vengeance sought by Count Tolstoi is a terrible one. Nothing less than the annihilation of the human species will satisfy his latest convictions, and if the race declines to extinguish itself, let it be Anathema. But the ruthless severity of the author-philosopher is tempered—not wittingly on his part, we may well suppose—by a certain defect of art in the composition of the story, "qua" story. For the reader can scarcely fail to perceive clearly and at a comparatively early stage of development that the murderer who describes his experiences so vividly is not at all the kind of man to solve social and ethical problems, is really an extremely narrow-minded, selfish, coarse, ignorant and jealous person, all of whose marital infelicities were plainly due to his own vices and foibles; whose egoism rendered him incapable of doing his duty in such a union, and whose ingrained suspiciousness had been nursed into monomania by constant indulgence.

A man so constituted must necessarily have morbid views; and since the disposition of all undisciplined minds is to seek the cause of their misfortunes in others and not in themselves, and to justify their own perversities by imputing sinister or unworthy purposes to the rest of the world, the story of Posdnicheff, if regarded as an attempt to represent the evolution of such a character, might be considered an unpleasant and ill-judged but forcibly realistic piece of work. This view, however, cannot be taken, since the author clearly intends Posdnicheff's views to be considered seriously, and as offering a sane presentation of the actual truth. The machinery of fiction, in short, has only been employed to give attraction and emphasis to Count Tolstoi's new ideas concerning marriage, and it is his deep-seated literary instinct, working unconsciously in a direction contrary to that of his didactic purpose, which has produced the anomalous conditions here indicated. The effort of course is fatal to the effectiveness of the theories sought to be propounded, for, in obedience to the demands of art, Posdnicheff has been described, not as an average man, not as a man in a normal state of mind, but as one whose reason has been perverted and his moral sense degraded through the unchecked indulgence of his purely individual vices and defects. The obvious intention of the author was to frame a libel upon Russian society, but in this he has failed, and because he is a much better novelist than philosopher. Regarding his choice of subject, indeed, it would be necessary to condemn it as in bad taste, as pertaining to that false naturalism which is affected by Zolaites, and as involving rather immoral than moral conclusions, were it not necessary to remember that the purpose really is to enforce what Count Tolstoi honestly, if mistakenly, thinks a lofty lesson in ethics.

Nevertheless "The Kreutzer Sonata" must be judged for what it is, whatever indulgence is accorded the writer on this or other grounds. As it stands it is the expression of a morbid, coarse and gross view of life; and beyond this it may be said to imply a toleration for murder fortunately not likely to meet with any sympathy outside of Russia, where juries in capital cases are permitted to take into account grounds of clemency unrecognized by the laws of any other country pretending to civilization. As to the picture of the Russian society presented in this book, it is no doubt as untrue to facts there as anywhere else. Instead of being a stern and uncompromising revelation of ugly truths, it is a hideous nightmare, the probable creation of a disordered mind, a gross caricature, having no better foundation than the morbid fancy of hybrid asceticism. It is indeed an unnatural compound of the old fanatical warfare upon nature and humanity as degraded and despicable and the equally unsound modern Pessimism which declares life not worth living. Truly a strange and unwholsome mixture this, and one out of which no good can come. Turgenieff, when dying, wrote to Tolstoi, and gave him excellent advice. "Go back," he said, "go back, dear friend, to your literary work. The gift you have is from above, whence comes every good gift we possess. How happy I should be if I could believe that my entreaty would have the effect I desire!" As yet Tolstoi adheres to his visionary ideas, and if they have not destroyed his great literary gift, they have certainly perverted it and caused it to be expended upon foolish or futile purposes. "The Kreutzer Sonata" will assuredly lead the truest admirers of the author of "Peace and War" and "Anna Karenina" to echo Turgenieff's wish, and to regret once more the infatuation which threatens to wreck a noble reputation and career.

BOOKS AND WRITERS.

"The Light of the World" is the title of the epic which Sir Edwin Arnold is writing in his Japanese home. The subject is the life and teaching of the founder of Christianity.

What have cynics to say to these reverent words, which will be found in Stanley's forthcoming article in "Scribner": "Constrained at the darkest hour to humbly confess that without God's help I was helpless, I vowed a vow in the forest solitudes that I would confess His aid before men. Silence, as of death, was round about me; it was midnight; I was weakened by illness, prostrated by fatigue, and wan with anxiety for my white and black companions, whose fate was a mystery. In this physical and mental distress I besought God to give me back my people. Nine hours later we were exulting with a rapturous joy. In full view of all was the crimson flag with the crescent, and beneath its waving folds was the long-lost rear column."

The illustrations for the Stanley paper have been made from some remarkable photographs, many of them having been taken in the forest never before seen by white men. The article is said to deal with one of the most exciting episodes of the expedition. The July number of "Scribner" will contain an article on "How Stanley Wrote His Book," illustrated by drawings and photographs of the explorer and his house at Cairo. The author is Edward Marston, the English publisher.

There is in the current number of "Temple Bar" some uncommonly interesting records of conversations with the late E. J. Trelawny. Concerning Byron's avarice Trelawny said:

"In his youth he spent more than he ought, but in latter years he was avaricious. Byron always paraded his generosity; Shelley always gave in secret. Byron confessed (and I had only £300 a year, while he had £4,000) that he was in my debt and that he must settle. But I always turned it off. He confessed that he had saved £1,500 out of one year's income. Shelley had £1,000 a year, and gave away £500 every year."

Of Mary Shelley's mental faculties Trelawny spoke thus: "Her mind was nothing particular. She was not worthy of Shelley. Her father taught her a good deal, and Shelley the rest."

Speaking of Byron's portraits, he said: "There is but one good likeness of Byron, and that is the work of Thorwaldsen. A statue should, when possible, resemble the original that it is erected to. Byron's sister, his wife, Hobhouse, Kinnaird, Harness, and myself, all considered the bust by Thorwaldsen was the best in existence of Byron. The portraits by Phillips and others were unlike him, both in drawing and expression. Byron himself thought they were caricatures. The miniature by Holmes that you have of mine his sister thought very like; but she considered that no artist of his time could do justice to his expressive face. I was with Lady Byron when the statue by Thorwaldsen was unpacked. Lady Byron's cold nature warmed at the sight of it. Impetuosity got the better of her for once, as she exclaimed: 'How like my dear Byron! only not half beautiful enough for him.' Miss Leigh could find but one fault in it; the lobe of the ear did not lie close enough to the cheek, which was one of Byron's facial peculiarities."

I reminded him of Lady Blessington's remarks on Byron's personal appearance, and asked him whether the description petite was correct. "Certainly not. He had a large chest, and was a good-sized man."

Trelawny had a poor opinion of Byron's proficiency in the noble art of self-defence. "His boxing was all humbug. He liked to talk about it, but it was all talk."

I reminded him that he took lessons from "Gentleman Jackson."

"Yes, I know; but he could not stand, I tell ye! he had to lean against something. I've boxed with him often, and have always been afraid of killing him. He has shown me some of the marks I have left on his arm after an encounter. He had no stamina; it was all energy. If I were to say to him, 'I have a horse I should like you to look at,' he would jump up so (here Trelawny jumped up and took two strides), and would then sit down—his lameness making itself felt—and say, 'I will look at your horse when I go out.' His walking was a sad performance. He would walk two or perhaps three hundred yards, when the sweat would stand out on his brow, and he would gladly sit down."

I asked him on another occasion whether he could account for the strong feeling that existed against Byron during his lifetime.

"There was no feeling against Byron—against Shelley plenty, against Byron none. Shelley was simply without vice of any kind. Byron's attack against Shelley was mainly on account of the manner in which the groundlings attack Shelley. He is better than any one. I said: 'Would you defend him?' and he answered: 'Shelley requires no defender. I write for the groundlings,' Shelley writes for men; when I am forty I will write for men also.'"

Trelawny concluded these remarks by saying: "Shelley will live for ever; there was never, and never will be, any one like him."

Some days later we fell into our usual talk about Byron. He said: "They have spread about the report that Byron was given to drum-drinking. Nothing could be more false. He has often said to me: 'Come and dine, Tre, and we will carouse.' But, pah! what was his 'carouse'? Half a glass of punch! He had not the strength, but he liked to think he had, and liked to talk about his (imaginary) failings.

Speaking of Lady Blessington's "Conversations with Byron," a book which Trelawny held in the greatest contempt, he said: "Byron never uttered a word of French in his talk; the whole thing is false."

Of Leigh Hunt, the "Pirate" had a poor opinion, and called him "an insipid Cockney," adding that his behavior during the burning of Shelley's body was "that of a sickly girl, rather than of a man." Of Southey he said: "Southey offended Byron mortally by saying to a mutual acquaintance: 'If you take off Byron's shoe you will see the cloven foot.' Byron, who was told this, never forgave the malicious tuft-hunter whom he handled so severely in his poems."

R. L. Stevenson is said to be himself deeply interested in the story which he is writing for "The Ledger." He writes to the publishers that it "has something of a Monte Cristo flavor, being the tale of an abominable crime and a singular vengeance. I have great hopes of the tale; the incidents are strange, and so are the characters."

An illustrated edition de luxe of "Hans of Iceland," one of Victor Hugo's early works, is on the press of Estes & Lauriat. The edition is limited to 500 numbered copies.

This dictum concerning the novel is set forth by the Rev. Herbert D. Ward:

An author should be able to tell his tale in a book of from three to five hundred pages 16mo. A taste educated by such a master as Guy de Maupassant will teach us what we want. It will not tolerate a digression that is not articulated to the plot and movement of the narrative. The tender descriptions of sunsets and scenery, so dear to the soul of the writer, can better serve dished up as an independent ode to spring than as padding to a novel. The very nervousness of our national life, that demands the dollar cash for the minute spent, has much to do with the creation of the short novel.

Ideals and ideas are what the people demand. These must be expressed in a popular form. They must move us into a higher life. The short novel has become the consecrated vehicle of nineteenth century thought.

CHARLES A. DANA.

CHAT ABOUT THE EDITOR OF "THE SUN."

Julian Ralph in Chatter.

You may see him on any day except Sunday at the corner window in the third story of "The Sun" building, leaning back in his chair to rap his fingers with his pencil while he is thinking, or bending over a table to write. The room in which he is seated is one of four that compose the editorial suite. It contains a desk, two chairs, a small table and a rug as its main appointments. On the walls are a few pictures—one of the Count Joannes, one of the original quartet of Harper brothers, one of the late Mark Maguire, a reporter, and a framed lithograph advertising the Willimantic Thread Company. These pictures have no especial significance. Apparently they merely happened there, for it is a rule that whatever picture, ornament or other thing it drifts there stays there. Mr. Dana has no pride in the adornment of his office. He asks only that it be kept clean and tidy. His home is a palace. His office is a workshop. A revolving bookcase is on his desk, and on top of that is a stuffed owl. There is a lounge, that I forgot, in a corner of the room, but Mr. Dana never was seen to use it. It is evidently another bit of flotsam like the pictures. . . .

His manner is almost certain to be vivacious. His good humor is perpetual. That sounds impossible, or possibly only a strained guess, yet it is his distinguishing characteristic, and its explanation brings forward the queerest thing about the man. And that queerest thing is the secret of his success. He loves his business. On that account he can be most good-humored when he feels that he is writing an article that divides the people between applause and indignation. I have often heard of men who love their business, and have often heard men claim that distinction for themselves, but Charles A. Dana is the only man or journalist I ever saw or knew who gleefully and heartily enjoyed his work. At times he fairly bubbles over with the enjoyment of it. Of course that can only be true of a man who loves life itself, who boasts perfect health and the power to satisfy his longings, be they humble or grand. At beyond sixty Mr. Dana is the youngest man, in spirits, in "The Sun" office; his step is certainly the lightest, his eye kindles the most frequently and spontaneously, his complexion and skin are those of a pedestrian.

I remember once hearing a famous Cabinet officer say to him, on shaking hands with him, "Well, Mr. Dana, I don't see how you stand this infernal grind."

"Grind!" said Mr. Dana: "You never were more mistaken. I have nothing but fun.

"Jolly" is a favorite word with him, a word used only to express uncommon pleasure, such as has been afforded by a trip abroad or a run to Cuba or Mexico, or by the perusal of something especially pleasing in "The Sun's" columns.

"You're letting yourself grow old," I heard him say once to a decidedly decrepit man. "Do you read novels, and play billiards, and walk a great deal?"

"No, no, no," said the old man, sadly, at each pause.

"I so," said Mr. Dana, with the exuberance of a child. "I have fun from morning till night."

I have been asked the queerest questions about Mr. Dana wherever I have gone on either continent. A favorite question is this: "Does Dana really come down every morning and take up a subject, and say to himself, 'Now, what is the natural, humdrum way of treating this?' and does he, upon finding out what that was is, order an article written in any other way than that? Do you believe he really says to himself, 'Everybody thinks so and so, therefore I'll take the opposite grounds?'" Of course, that is absurd. The best answer to those or any other questions about Mr. Dana and his paper is that no one except himself knows what it is going to do, or why it does it. But, obviously, this is the direct result of an ebullient, vigorous and waggish nature, touched just a little with sarcasm. With that key you can read between the lines of any article in his paper. . . .

He is a persistent worker. He comes to his desk at 10 in the morning and remains until 5 in the evening. He writes a great deal, and is apt to contribute to every department of his paper except the advertising columns. Nearly all his work is dictated at first to a stenographer. Then it is carefully revised, and then revised again in proof. Of articles that others write he has seldom been known to read a page in manuscript. He sends the copy to the composing room and reads the proof. "He can raise more Cain with a proof than any other man in the world," I once heard a printer say, but that is not true. That distinction has been nobly earned by Paul Dana, his son. One thing that Mr. Dana does to an extent not known on any other paper, is the reading of proofs for what you might call their appearance. Wherever he finds one word or two short words forming a ragged line by themselves at the end of a paragraph, he goes through the paragraph to find words that can be stricken out to allow the paragraph to end solidly.

Above all things else he is quick in mind and movement. He can read all the morning papers of New-York in fifteen minutes. There is a whirl of paper in the air during the operation, as he turns leaf after leaf and runs his eyes up and down the columns. He seems to see instinctively whatever each paper contains that is peculiar or noteworthy, whether it is a skeletal or a column. A new man at the City Desk of "The Sun" noticed that Mr. Dana sent for the papers every morning and almost instantly returned them. Wondering at this, he asked the office-boy what the chief did with the papers. "Well," said the boy, a typical New-York lad, "I pile 'em on his desk and he frees 'em on de floor, and then I gadder 'em up again and bring 'em back to you."

He is as much quicker in speech and decision as lightning is quicker than rain. It is difficult to talk with him on that account or, rather, it is bewildering to one who is not used to him. He seems to hear all you are going to say when you are just beginning to say it. Here is an example: In order not to bother him too often, one of his lieutenants used to "save up" things to see him about. On one day only two matters occurred that called for his counsel. The lieutenant decided to go to the chief and say that there was a man in the office who had tanned a piece of human skin and made a pair of boots of it, and did Mr. Dana want an article written about the matter? Also, that up in St. Johnsbury, Vt., a clergyman had been arrested upon a criminal charge, and there was to follow a long and complicated story about that. The lieutenant went into the chief's room, and this is what was said:

"Mr. Dana, there's a man at my desk who has tanned human hide and made a pair of boots—"

"Ugh," said Mr. Dana, "how him out of the office."

"Yes, sir," said the lieutenant, "and up in St. Johnsbury a clergyman has been arrested for—"

"Go yourself. Take the 6 o'clock train this evening. Anything more, Mr. ——?"

THE COLLECT

FOR THE SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

O God! the King of glory and all praise,
Who didst Thy Son, from the sepulchral cave,
Lord Jesus Christ up to Thy kingdom raise
In heaven most high triumphal from the grave
Leave us not comfortless! we now implore
But send Thine Holy Spirit to restore
Our fainting souls and so exalt us there
Whither our Saviour Christ is gone before
Through whom we humbly lift our hearts in prayer,
Who lives and reigns with Thee forevermore.

T. W. PARSONS.

A NEW SHIP.

From The Boston Transcript.

"What is it about this 'ere new war vessel that they're all talking about?" said Mr. Silas Lapham, at the Million Club last evening.

"What new war vessel? What's the name of 'er?" said Commodore Jibbs of the West Roxbury Yacht Club, looking up.

"Why, this 'ere cruiser Sonata, that they have so much about in the papers.

"Never heard of her," said Commodore Jibbs.

Probably young Hiffine, who seized his nose between his finger and his thumb and went hurriedly out of the room, was the only man present who divined that Mr. Lapham had "The Kreuzter Sonata" in mind.

ART NEWS AND COMMENTS.

THE WEEK IN ART CIRCLES.

CLOSE OF THE ACADEMY—NOTES ON THE EXHIBITIONS—ART NEWS ABROAD.

The sixty-fifth annual exhibition of the Academy of Design closed last evening with the smallest amount of sales known for ten years. The total is only about $17,000. The amounts obtained in past years have been $20,500 in 1889, $22,000 in 1888, $28,000 in 1887, $27,000 in 1886, $29,000 in 1885, $30,000 in 1884, $40,000 in 1883, $39,000 in 1882, $42,800 in 1881, and $28,000 in 1880. This year's result has not been unexpected, nor can it be said to be undeserved. It is to be hoped that this lesson may be applied next year. The pictures sold in the course of the last week have been "On the Retired List," M. C. Uhl, $50; "With the Tide," J. G. Brown, $1,000; "Violets," C. M. Gaskill, $35; "Winnowing Field," W. E. Nettleton, $90, and "The Marble Haulers," Lloyd Branson, $400.

The exhibition of the Society of American Artists, at the Fifth Avenue Galleries, will close on Saturday next. The attendance, although much smaller than at the Academy, has been better than ever before. The number of admission tickets sold is reported as 1,700 for the first week, 1,300 for the second and about 1,400 for the third. Since the last time of writing, three pictures have been sold, "At the Head of the River," K. I. Langdon, $125; "A Winter Landscape," Theodore Robinson, $300; and "Roses," A. H. Thayer, $1,000.

Mr. Robinson's "Winter Landscape," which obtained the Webb prize, is a clever study of snowy housetops below a hillside, and of a valley and trees beyond. There is some reddish coloring in the foreground and the distance shows the usual purple tones. The atmosphere is misty and vague, but the colors are comparatively strong. The execution is free, and open to the charge of paintiness, but at the proper distance the picture "holds together" well, and the effect is truthful. Mr. Robinson's pictures have been seen at various local exhibitions for the last two or three years, and the artist has proved that he possesses the modern spirit of inquiry and the modern freedom from the older conventionalism. His effort to paint nature truthfully has not resulted in the sacrifice of pictorial effect which is seen in some of the work of Monet's school. But these pictures represent school work and not independent and mature performance. They are primarily studies of effect, and by no means complete compositions. The artist appears to be strongly influenced by the painting of Pissarro and Serret and Monet, and his individual quality is, as yet, only partially apparent. The time for awarding prizes is when an artist has "found himself" and developed his own style. The choice of Mr. Robinson's pictures emphasizes the experimental character and promptness in the adoption of foreign fashions which have been noted in the society's exhibitions. Mr. Coffin's "After the Thunderstorm" is a picture which has claims to consideration as a composition, and it is a seriously considered and successful study of a difficult effect. It is a far more ambitious and a subtler picture than usually comes from our studios. It is strange that the exhibitors should have passed over this picture, the "September Breeze," Mr. Hassam's "Enchanted Hour," and it is probable that Mr. Ochtman's "Moonlight Fantasy" might be added, if the picture could be seen.

Mr. S. P. Avery, jr., exhibits one of Munkacsy's wood interiors with figures, two entirely artificial young women in blue and pink who are placed in a grassy opening, which is dotted with flowers, against a background of artificial foliage. The execution is hasty