HOLIDAY BOOKS.

OLD GARDENS, OLD SUN DIALS AND OLD FURNITURE.

ENGLISH PLEASURE GARDENS. By Rose Standish Nichols. With Eleven Plans, Drawn by Allen H. Cox, and Nearly Three Hundred Reproductions of Original Photographs and Drawings by the Author. Octavo, pp. xxii, 324. The Macmillan Company.

FORMAL GARDENS IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND. Their Planning and Arrangement, Architectural and Ornamental Features. By H. Inigo Triggs, A. R. I. B. A. Illustrated by Seventy-two Plates from Drawings by the Author and Fifty-three Reproduced from Photographs by Charles Latham. In Three Parts. Part III. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons.

EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE GARDENS. Papers Read Before the American Institute of Architects by A. D. F. Hamlin, R. Clipston Sturgis, John Galen Howard and K. Honda. Edited by Glenn Brown, Secretary. Illustrated. Octavo, pp. 162. Philadelphia: Henry T. Coates & Co.

SUN DIALS AND ROSES OF YESTERDAY. Garden Delights Which Are Here Displayed in Very Truth, and Are, Moreover, Regarded as Emblems. By Alice Morse Earle. Illustrated. Octavo, pp. xxiii, 461. The Macmillan Company.

FURNITURE OF THE OLDEN TIME. By Francis Clary Morse. Illustrated. Octavo, pp. xvii, 371. The Macmillan Company.

The enthusiasm for gardening which has of late years spread over the United States is being fostered by the publication of innumerable books on the subject. These are generally written by lovers of gardens, who give due attention to the more romantic charms of their subject, but who have learned also to be practical. They are interesting and they are useful. Their pages are considerably enhanced in value by the resources of illustration which photography places at their disposal. The garden book of to-day is, in a very satisfactory sense, a book of pictures. Such a publication is Miss Nichols's "English Pleasure Gardens." We hardly know which is the more valuable part of her work, her readable chapters, packed with facts, or her voluminous body of illustrations from photographs and drawings. The text is arranged on an uncommonly good system. In the first chapter such material as exists relating to the garden of antiquity is briefly traversed. It is not, perhaps, the best chapter in the book. Miss Nichols does less than justice to Hadrian's great villa at Tivoli, which, even in its present ruined state, is eloquent of a noble splendor. But the author says enough in this chapter to indicate what the classical era bequeathed in the way of ideas to later makers of gardens, and in two succeeding chapters there are some altogether delightful pages on aspects of the subject too often neglected, the character of monastic gardens, and that of what Miss Nichols calls, in appropriate old parlance "the mediæval pleasaunce." She is carried far afield by these themes, as she is, indeed, by the gardens of the Italian Renaissance and those of the seventeenth century French masters; but while she glances again and again at European models, her chief concern with them is in their relation to English procedure. She is perhaps disposed to overestimate the individuality of Tudor gardens, but, on the whole, her argument is as sound as it is clearly stated. Her book should form an indispensable guide to the amateur who wishes to see English gardening, as a whole, and yet wishes also to learn just what the stages of its historical development signify as to native and foreign forces.

We have upon a previous occasion fully described and warmly praised Mr. Triggs's work on "Formal Gardens in England and Scotland," the third and last part of which has just appeared. The three portfolios provide a remarkable survey of the masterpieces of British gardening. The photographic plates are the largest in scale and the finest in quality that have been printed since the making of illustrated garden literature became a fine art, and Mr. Triggs's measured drawings are precisely what the modern gardener, emulous of his historic predecessors, wants and can put to good use. This third portfolio includes among its photographic plates some superb views of the Italian garden at Bowood, the privy garden at Hatfield, the romantic rose gardens of Rockingham and Broughton castles, the grand walk at Belton House, and the famous works of the toplarist at Levens Hall. There are also some plates, both from photographs and drawings, of the leaden figures, urns and cisterns, which are among the most characteristic features of the great English gardens.

The virtue of practicality, upon which those who care for gardens can never weary of placing emphasis, is exemplified in striking measure in "European and Japanese Gardens." The four papers here collected were written by architects for architects, and they illustrate, therefore, those principles which it is most important for the amateur to keep in mind, the principles binding together a garden and the villa or mansion for which it is designed. Mr. Hamlin writes of Italian gardens, Mr. Sturgis of English, Mr. Howard of French, and Mr. Honda of Japanese, a few notes on a Japanese garden in California being added by Mr. C. H. Townsend. It is doubtful if anywhere in America save on the Pacific slope the Japanese garden could be developed with any approach to congruity, but the three other schools treated in this book supply, of course, many motives that are easily adjusted to our conditions, and these essays should prove very serviceable. They are accompanied by numerous reproductions from photographs, beautifully clear half tones, well printed on calendered paper.

The author of "Sun Dials and Roses of Yesterday" alludes more than once to the collection of dials and dial literature possessed by Mr. Lewis Evans, of Watford, England. In it there are over four hundred books and pamphlets upon the subject. It is doubtful if among them there is a popular work more satisfactory than this of Mrs. Earle's. She has the deepest sympathy for "the charm and sentiment of sun dials," to which she devotes her first chapter, full of apt allusions and illuminating quotations, and she has explored the whole field with such industry that her book is a perfect mine of useful information. She knows all the kinds of sun dials, classifies them with erudition relieved by anecdote, goes into the secrets of their construction, treats of them in their emblematic aspect, discourses on the placing of them in gardens, gives a quantity of the mottoes which have been invented for them, and then appropriately fills out her book with some readable chapters on roses. Page after page offers some pretty description or some bit of quaintness which we would like to quote, but we confine ourselves to one passage, embodying a novel suggestion that ought certainly to be taken up by the committee in charge of the beautifying of Washington, and be pressed upon the government until it is adopted:

I beg to call the attention of the government of the United States and the Commissioners of the District of Columbia to an opportunity of easily making the finest sun dial in the entire world, or if not that, the finest noon mark. The Washington Monument, with its superb shaft 555 feet in height, most glorious of all gnomons, traces unmarked day by day its wonderful parabolic path on the greensward around it. What a beautiful sight it would be if the government would order the tracing of its analemma and mark the hours with beds of flowers! What an instructive and inspiring object it would be to all who visit that great monument; there might arise from its inspiration some thoughtful youth, another Ferguson or Wren, to add to the list of the great mathematicians of the world. If a sun dial is not traced, a meridian line positively should be set; a line of stone or white marble, a noon mark in the grass. This would not equal the dial, but would be better than the unmarked round of to-day.

Mrs. Earle's illustrations are drawn not only from photographs of existing sun dials, here and abroad, but from old prints and diagrams. The book is handsomely made, with a decorated cover, and is, indeed, an ideal Christmas gift.

A book similar in form, and likewise published with special reference to the holiday purchaser, is Miss Morse's "Furniture of the Olden Time." It treats of the furniture of the American Colonies, much of it brought from England, but a great deal also produced by our own cabinetmakers. The text gives a fair outline of the history of the subject, but is largely descriptive. The illustrations are nearly three hundred in number, all of them half tones from photographs. This volume is not, perhaps, as readable as it might be, but it is very satisfactory as a source of guidance for the collector. We are all collectors nowadays, and the furniture of our forefathers is an especially important object of pursuit. Miss Morse makes clear to her reader the qualities he should look for; illustrations make it impossible for him to go wrong in the identification of the different types of chairs and tables, desks, clocks and mirrors; and as the book is published in a convenient octavo it ought to win a wide popularity.

A "BLUGGY" BOOK.

CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY ON SOME HISTORIC FIGHTS.

BORDER FIGHTS AND FIGHTERS. Stories of the Pioneers Between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi and in the Texas Republic. By Cyrus Townsend Brady. With maps, plans and many illustrations by Louis Betts, Howard Giles, J. N. Marchand, Roy L. Williams, Harry Fenn and A. de F. Pitney. 12mo., pp. xvi, 382. McClure, Phillips & Co.

Heroes and heroines enough to furnish a Hall of Fame are presented to us by Mr. Brady in this latest volume in his "Fighters' Series." He has brought a wonderful relish to his subject, and he tells the stirring tales with sympathy, dash, spirit and discrimination. The tone, though thrilling with loyal Americanism, is generous to brave and honorable foes, and the crescendo and superlative are not abused. In fact the work is admirable, and cannot fail to give delight to many generations of our youths and to increase the military spirit. He would indeed be a glutton for excitement and adventure who desired more than is to be found in these pages, which contain a score of massacres, two score of battles and sieges, a hundred hairbreadth escapes and half a hundred romances among the events. The author has taken such matters as General Harrison's fights with Tecumseh, Jackson's victory at Tohopeka, the massacre at Fort Mims, the battle of King's Mountain, the desperate defence of the Alamo, Croghan's defence of Fort Stevenson, the last stand of the Creek Indians, the trapping of Santa Anna and the adventures of Boone, Brady and Crockett, and treated each as a separate story, and all in one volume, with an adherence to truth that gives historical value, and with a keen perception of the picturesque and dramatic.

The most breathless moment of the book is reached on page 158, when the women and children of Bryan's station go out to the spring to get the water that is a vital necessity. They know that the woods are full of Indians and that the largest body of savages lies near this spring, but these have been concealed, while on the other side Indians have shown themselves to attract the attention of the fort's defenders. The men have reasoned that the savages will make a feint on the front and a real attack on the rear, or spring side, and that sooner than disclose their position they will let the women and children get the water. Acting on that theory, out go the women, taking some children with them, and laughing and talking, right down among the savages, who lie still. And afterward, when the Indians made a dash to follow them, they found that they had been tricked and trapped.

Here is a little bit from the end of the defence of the Alamo (page 325), which the author characterizes as the most desperate in our history:

The only fight left now is in the churchyard. A little handful, bloody, powder stained, desperate, are backed up against the wall. It is hand to hand work now on both sides; no time to reload, bayonet thrust against rifle butt in berserker fury. Hope is lost, but they are dying in high fashion, faces to the foe, striking while they have a heartbeat left. "Fire the magazine," says Crockett to Major Evans, the only remaining officer. The man runs toward the church where the powder is stored, and is stricken down on the threshold. The Mexicans rush upon Crockett and his remnant. The keen deathdealing "Betsy" has spoken for the last time, the old frontiersman has clasped it by the barrel now. Swinging his iron war club, he stands at bay, disdaining surrender. The Mexicans are piled before him in heaps, but numbers tell; they swarm about him, they leap upon him like hounds upon a great stag, they pull him down, bury their bayonets in his great heart, spurn him, trample upon him, spit upon him—so he makes a fine end.

Into this bloody tragedy comes Farce, grinning through his horse collar, as we find him in Shakespeare, for Travis, the leader of the Alamo's defenders, must needs add to his letter calling on all Americans for assistance: "P. S.—The Lord is on our side"; suggesting that this was a late and surprising discovery.

"CITIZEN TRAIN."

HIS RECOLLECTIONS OF A LONG AND BUSY LIFE.

MY LIFE IN MANY STATES AND IN FOREIGN LANDS. Dictated in my seventy-fourth year. By George Francis Train. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. xxi, 348. D. Appleton & Co.

"Citizen Train," after recounting the incidents of his amazingly active and enterprising career, observes that he has "lived fast." "I was born into a slow world," he says, "and I wished to oil the wheels and gear, so that the machine would spin faster, and, withal, to better purpose." True to this habit of rapidity, he has fluently dictated the story of his life in the space of thirty-five hours. It was spoken to a stenographer in his room in the Mills Hotel, in Bleecker-st., where he has led the life of a recluse during July and August, one or two hours being given to it on two or three days each week.

He was supporting himself on a farm at the age of four, and at twenty was partner in a shipping firm, with an income of $20,000. He represented his firm in Liverpool, organized the shippers there, outgrew his promising position, organized a firm of his own, and built the largest clippers of the day. Then he transferred his interests to Australia. Afterward he promoted the first street railways in Europe, and the Union Pacific Railway here, was prominently involved in the Ligue du Midi at Marseilles in 1870, acquired a villa at Newport and a house in Madison-ave., ran as an independent candidate for the Presidency against Grant and Greeley, and finally entered suddenly upon a life of seclusion in a hotel where he could live for $3 a week. Up to this time the only breathing spells he seems to have experienced were fifteen confinements in jail. Of these he says:

My prison experience has been more varied than that of the most confirmed and hardened criminal, and yet I have never committed a crime, cheated a human being or told a lie. I have been imprisoned in almost every sort of jail that man has devised. I have been in police stations, in Marshalseas in England and in Ireland, in common jails in Boston, in the Bastile of Lyons, in the Prefecture at Tours as the prisoner of Gambetta, Dictator of France, and in the famous old Tombs of New-York. I have used prisons well. They have been as schools to me, where I have reflected and learned more about myself—and a man's own self is the best object of any one's study. I have also made jails the source of fruitful ideas, and from them have launched many of my most startling and useful projects and innovations.

When Mr. Train wanted to meet a man, however prominent and hedged with ceremony, he always found a way of succeeding. He tells of using with good effect a letter given him by Webster to President Taylor, signed by the latter on request and by Henry Clay. "I believe that two signatures are usually necessary on Mr. Webster's paper," said Mr. Clay, smiling, when consenting to the young man's request. When in Scotland, to stupefy a group of young English students, he enclosed his card in this talismanic letter and sent it up to Lord John Russell, who had just returned to the hotel from an audience with the Queen at Balmoral. He was accorded an interview. On the card he had written:

An American in the Highlands of Scotland is delighted to know that he is under the same roof with England's Premier, Lord John Russell, and, before he goes, would ask the pleasure of speaking with his lordship for a moment.

Train visited the Grand Duke Constantine at Strelna, in Russia, on the strength of a letter from him to Captain Hudson, of the cable laying boat Niagara, expressing official thanks for the invitation of Russian officers to the initial laying of the cable. The letter, Train insisted, demanded an answer in person, and he would deliver it; this he accomplished, overriding the suggestions of the American Ministers at London and St. Petersburg as to its transmission. The story of this remarkable life is a record of unhesitating initiative, accustomed to succeed before the surprise it occasioned had subsided; and joined to this faculty he had a knack of seeing the short cut to improvement in any practical matter. The narrative is sensational in its substance, straightforward and downright in its manner.

RARE BINDINGS.

ANOTHER EXHIBITION OF LUXURIOUSLY COVERED BOOKS.

The exhibition of book bindings and first editions which has been on view this week in Bonaventure's book shop, at No. 6 West Thirty-third-st., is as interesting as any of the several which have been seen there in years past. Mr. Bonaventure searches out his specimens personally every season in Europe, and keeps constantly in touch with the work of living binders and collectors. The tendency of the times is toward new effects. The popular binders depart from the styles that carry the approval of long tradition, from sober, restrained line in sure, clean execution and rich color of repeated layers of gold in plain leathers. Their preference is rather for greater freedom in design, both of tooling and in complicated inlaying of different levants, in harmonizing or contrasting hues. Their work is well represented in this exhibit, side by side with examples of the masterly, if conservative, manner, and specimens old in time as well as practice, seventeenth century work, and even Persian.

Midway between the two tendencies stands the work of Zaehnsdorf, whose familiar method is represented by such covers as a green crushed levant, with inlays of red richly tooled, for a volume of Shelley's "Posthumous Poems," London, 1824; and a copy of Stevenson's "Essay on Walt Whitman," in the Roycroft edition, 1900, done with inlays of green flowers in red, with conventional marginal design in heavy tooling. An edition of Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter," Boston, 1850, is fashioned by Thierry in a design of the romantic period, with a tooled circle within a diamond, in an inlay of red in green. A well preserved first edition of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Boston, 1852, is shown by Canape. An elaborate and delicate treatment in "eventail" is given by Jult fils to a copy of "Considerations sur l'Esprit et les Mœurs," second edition, London, 1789, with doublures of brown levant. A copy of the Vale Press "In Memoriam," 1901, is tastefully covered by Lortic in dark green levant. Specimens by David, Stikeman, De Sauty, Adams, Pomey, and a considerable list of other well known craftsmen make the collection a pleasure to the eye and a gratification to the intelligence.

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