

O CRUEL FANCY!

BY RICHARD ALISON.

Shall I abide this jesting?
I weep, and she's a feasting!
O cruel Fancy! that doth so blind me
To love one, that doth not mind me.

Can I abide this prancing?
I weep, and she's a dancing!
O cruel Fancy! so to betray me;
Thou goest about to slay me!

The New-York Tribune.

ILLUSTRATED SUPPLEMENT.

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Mr. C. K. Shorter, the literary paragrapher of "The London Sphere," is in a predicament which strikes us as amusing. It seems to him that Mr. G. K. Chesterton has hypnotized not only the public but the critics, and for the life of him he cannot see why this should be so. He looks into one newspaper and finds the author of "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" compared with Swift and Disraeli, but the book itself strikes him as "very foolish and irritating." Certain critics have exclaimed with admiration over Mr. Chesterton as an essayist, but Mr. Shorter, reading "Twelve Types," concludes that the book is lacking in salient ideas, contains nothing that has not been very much better said before. In short, while everybody is applauding this young man Mr. Shorter cannot help thinking that he has not "the faintest talent either as a novelist, a literary critic, or a literary biographer." Well, the sudden vogue of Mr. Chesterton is somewhat astonishing, but to reflect on the phenomenon is to see that there is nothing very startling about it, after all. Contemporary criticism on both sides of the Atlantic is written by a certain number of competent men and a vast horde of mediocrities who haven't the smallest conception of the difference between good literature and bad. To the latter a new favorite is periodically indispensable. They seize upon the latest clever duster and cry him up as a miracle of wit and wisdom; this reacts upon a certain number of editors and publishers, and before you know it a new "reputation" has been made. The experienced observer rubs his eyes in amazement for a moment, but presently recalls the number of times that this sort of thing has happened before, and goes on his way unperturbed.

While we are on the subject of literary ephemera we may venture an inquiry as to what has happened to the minor poet. Has he lost even the slight hold upon technical methods which have on occasion in the past served to keep him for a little while before the public? Never was there such a dearth of passable minor poetry as we have to record at this moment. Scores of volumes of verses appear, it is true, but the average is lower among them than it has been in years. It is as though the amiable Muse presiding over the destinies of this bypath in modern letters had exhausted herself in producing Mr. Stephen Phillips and Mr. William Watson, those great writers, and had then lost heart. Certainly she seems to have withdrawn her protection from the eager young ladies and gentlemen who continue to babble and babble about Life and Love and Death and other high-erected things, for those babblings remain, as Mr. James might say, of a feebleness, of an absurdity, of a flat preposterousness, that we find positively appalling. The minor poet, in short, must gird up his loins and do something. His very existence is at stake.

Music has always been a dangerous stumbling-block for novelists. So says Mr. J. F. Runciman, the musical critic, and few will disagree with him. "Fielding," he adds, "made a few acute remarks on the subject. George Eliot loved it—did she not write a poem on Joachim's playing of the Bach Chaconne?—but she touched even Purcell's "Tempest" music gingerly. Thackeray set people playing brilliant operatic variations on old fashioned silk fronted pianos; Dickens seems to have scurried out of the room whenever the piano was touched." But we are glad to see that Mr. Runciman has a good word for the author of "Evelyn Innes," who, he remarks, alone among modern novelists, has handled music "without, figuratively speaking, drawing horses with five legs." This, we are told, is because "he had heard a great deal of music, had lived much among musicians, and took the pains to have his work checked by competent persons." Also, it may be added, Mr. Moore has written well about music in his fiction, because, as we have more than once pointed out in dealing with his brilliant work, he brings common sense as well as imagination to his task, and eschews sentimentality with unwavering resolution. We may say as much of Mr. James Huneker, whose "Melomanias" showed that we have in America a writer as sane as Mr. Moore himself in the exploitation of musical ideas for romantic purposes. The trouble with the average novelist tackling a musical motive is that he immediately becomes grand, gloomy and peculiar, insists upon being profoundly esoteric, and whelms his work in a flood of mushy sentimentality. If Tolstoy's notion of the deleterious influence of music could be proved anywhere, it could be proved in the works of most of the so-called musical novelists.

SIR JOHN MOORE.

Some Sidelights on His Career from His Own Hand.

THE DIARY OF SIR JOHN MOORE. Edited by Major General J. F. Maurice, K. C. B. With portraits and maps. In two volumes. Octavo, pp. xxxii, 402; xx, 40L. Longmans, Green & Co.

The editor of these volumes is a hero worshipper, if ever there was one. He believes that Sir John Moore was a very great man, and he is far from being satisfied with the treatment which that fine soldier has received at the hands of certain historians. No writer on the subject indeed, who failed to pour glowing eulogy upon Moore, or estimated the famous retreat before Soult at anything less than the value of an epoch making exploit in military history, could satisfy Major General Sir G. F. Maurice. The latter scorns to "defend" his idol. "What I intend to do," he says, "is to claim for Britain, and to sustain and make good my claim, that the boldest, the most successful, the most brilliant stroke of war of all time was delivered by the captain to whom she, on the 7th of October,

Hamilton on his European travels. The future general went with the party, and for four years pursued his education in France, Switzerland, Germany and Italy. Moore was a clever lad, learning languages rapidly and acquiring other accomplishments, but showing, above all, at this formative period, a taste for the life of a soldier. His father encouraged him in this taste. "At Brunswick," writes John to his brother, "the duke got a sergeant who came every day and taught us the Prussian exercise. We are both pretty alert, and could fire and charge five times in a minute." In 1775, when they visited Berlin, Frederick received them with graciousness, and they saw him directing nearly forty thousand troops in field manoeuvres. General Maurice has these lines on the further incidents that contributed to the development of the boy's enthusiasm:

The old "Earl Marischal" of Scotland, who, after the final failure of the Stewarts, had taken service with Frederick, had become one of that great soldier's favorite generals. Having been at first attracted to the Moores' party by the presence of the premier duke of Scotland, he soon took a great fancy to the keen boy, who was studying with such zeal as I have recorded, in order to prepare himself for the career on which he had set his heart. The old soldier presented John with a pair of Prussian pistols and a small pocket Honore, which became his companions throughout life, and are still preserved in the family.



SIR JOHN MOORE.

(From the portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence.)

1808, intrusted the command of her armies in Portugal for action in Spain." To quote this passage is to show the importance of reading Moore's diary, as General Maurice has presented it, with great caution. If one yields to the spell of the editor's enthusiasm, one is likely to acquire a wrong idea of Moore's significance, to exaggerate his merits and achievements, and thus to do violence to his fame; for to put a man on a higher pedestal than he deserves is to insure for him, with absolute certainty, a fall in the future more humiliating than any which his worst enemy could devise.

The situation in the present instance is the more delicate because the "Diary" is one of those documents which do not in themselves fully illuminate and co-ordinate the elements in a difficult subject. Written from day to day as a record of facts, intended for the diarist's own eye alone; enriched to a certain extent by reflections on men and events, but never given the character of a really full and well balanced narrative, it contains details of interest to the military historian, and yet remains too professional, too limited in scope, to be accepted as forming anything save part of the raw material for a biography. In the proper hands it might have been put to admirable purpose, helping a writer to tell the story of Moore's life. General Maurice does at once too little and too much as an editor. He has not sufficiently organized the pages of the "Diary," giving his volumes literary form, making a clear consecutive narrative out of his material; and he has permitted himself too strenuous an argument in favor of Moore, appealing to the "Diary" to prove a splendor in the achievements of that officer which somehow, when all is said and done, the "Diary" fails to make us feel. We plough through the often dull pages, longing for some brilliant editor to pull them together, and wondering why they do not yield some explanation of General Maurice's excitement.

The "Diary" is introduced with a few interesting pages on Moore's boyhood and youth. He was the son of a physician and writer who, in 1772, undertook to look after the young Duke of

From Berlin the party went to Vienna, where Joseph II offered young Moore rapid promotion in the Austrian army if he would accept a commission from him. Moore, as he told his brother Graham, then about to enter the navy, had already in his mind's eye a very different prospect, foreshadowing what was before him. "I hope," he writes on October 21, 1775, "that in some years after this you and I will thrash the monstems, both by sea and by land; but I hope we won't make war on the Spaniards, for the Spanish Ambassador is the best and the kindest man I ever saw."

At fifteen he was an ensign in the 51st Regiment, and, though because of his youth he was allowed to delay in joining the colors, he entered upon his duties at Minorca a year later, and by the summer of 1779 was under fire on this side of the Atlantic. He showed gallantry early in his military career, but, what was even more striking, he showed a capacity for command and a sense of discipline which in those days was sorely needed. It is interesting to find him concerned at the outset for the suppression of drunkenness and gambling among both officers and men. "I have got the machine into as good order as I can," he writes of the regiment on one occasion, and the remark is characteristic. He was one of the officers of his day who realized that an army needs first and last to be kept in order and to be handled like a well oiled machine. He had brains behind his gallantry. It was this, perhaps, which led to a regrettable episode in his career. Treating of Moore's participation in the Corsican campaign, General Maurice is obviously sympathetic toward his attitude in the strained situation which ultimately led to his recall. Sir Gilbert Elliot was doubtless not easy to get on with, and Moore's dislike of his policy can be readily understood. But the disinterested reader can understand what is evidently not very clear to General Maurice—that Moore, without meaning to make trouble, and, in fact, quite unconsciously, could easily have shown his distaste for the Viceroy's course in ways to irritate that personage and make his expulsion from the island seem the best way out of an intolerable state of affairs. The "Diary" at this point is not so useful a document as General Maurice apparently finds it. Whether Elliot or Moore was right in the controversy

which the personalities of Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo did so much to foment is, in a sense, beside the point. The main fact is that Elliot, as Viceroy, may very naturally have felt that Moore was not, on the whole, a factor making, in the circumstances, for the harmony that was essential. At all events the "Diary" makes better reading when it traverses Moore's West Indian expedition, and, taking us to his period of service in Ireland, shows us something of his methods as an administrator in the field. We have a glimpse of his invariable moderation in this brief passage:

I took my post in Lord Tyrone's park, which afforded a good position. The house was small, very neatly furnished, and had escaped destruction. I immediately placed a guard upon it, with orders to admit neither officers nor men into it. I made use of one room for myself to eat and write in, but I slept at the bivouac with the troops. An old housekeeper told me that the rebels had left one cellar untouched, and that I might have wine. I refused it, though I had none, and contented myself with drinking water out of his lordship's burgundy glasses. I paid for the milk, etc., which were furnished to me. In this army the tendency to pillage is so great, and I set my face so much against it, that I find it necessary to be extremely circumspect. Altogether, I had more enjoyment from the water than I could have had from the best wine.

He finished his apprenticeship in Holland, where he received three wounds and otherwise earned the appreciation of his superiors and the admiration of his men. When he went with Abercromby to Egypt it was as a seasoned officer, from whom much was expected. He did splendid work in the East, work especially notable for the thoughtfulness underlying it; and this precious trait in Moore—his capacity for thinking out military problems—is further illustrated in the chapter given to his labors in Kent. There he began by regarding the talk of a French invasion as Napoleonic "bluff," but he got over that, and ended by making every effort to bring order out of chaos and create discipline among Britons whose patriotism had previously failed to develop a sufficient sense of what would be required to withstand a determined and experienced foe. In the camp at Shorncliffe, as Sir William Napier has said, "he devised such improvements in drill, discipline, dress, arms, formation and movements as would have placed him for military reforms beside the Athenian Iphicrates, if he had not the greater glory of dying like the Spartan Brasidas. His materials were the 43d, 52d and Rifle regiments, and he so fashioned them that afterward, as the Light Division under Wellington, they were found to be soldiers unsurpassable, perhaps never equalled." To wise instruction he added inspiring example, moving constantly among his men, and bringing out their best efforts largely through bringing out their regard for his own character. Sir Charles Napier has thus sketched his friend in those days of zealous organization and training at Shorncliffe:

Sir John Moore was equally destitute of affected dignity. He entered into the society of those under his command as their equal, confident that his vast superiority as a man would, at all times, raise him above them more than even his great rank could do; he required no external aid. There was among his officers an awe of him; but it was not inspired by any reserve or haughtiness of manner on his part, though I have seen him put down pert and self-sufficient men by a degree of sarcasm which few could withstand; those who could were not likely to provoke it. His manners were extremely polished and agreeable, and at times even playful. I recollect once standing in the street at Lisbon looking at a very pretty woman who was at a window, when some one gently laid hold of both my ears, saying in a joking tone, "Ah, calf! have I caught you? What right have you to look at such an ugly woman as that? I will put you under arrest." Turning around, I saw it was the commander in chief. "I will thank you for the punishment, sir," said I, "if you will place the ugly old woman over me as sentry." Another time, when going from his quarters in the village of Sandgate to the evening parade on the heights of Shorncliffe, the ascent being steep, Moore said to six or eight officers who were with him, "Now for a race to the top of the hill, and away we all started. Neil Campbell (afterward with Napoleon at Elba) beat us all, and Moore was second. These are trifling matters, but they mark the unaffected and social feelings of a great man, and as such the reader will perhaps pardon me.

General Maurice makes much of the really enlightened character of Moore's discipline. Speaking of Wellington and the army, he says that "his remedy and Crauford's was to flog and hang it into order," and he likes to dwell on Moore's superiority to this ruthless mode of moulding raw soldiers to good purpose. But we wish that he had been content to praise Moore only in the right place, avoiding laudation of him as a great military genius. A great deal of space is given in this book to the famous retreat that ended in its leader's death. The importance of that retreat to the allies in the Peninsula has been recognized by all historians. Why could not General Maurice have let well enough alone? We have quoted above his almost bombastic tribute to Moore. His fervid pages put the valiant soldier in a false light, for they convey too much the impression that when Moore lured Soult's army after him he knew that the scheme culminating at Corunna would have tremendous, far-reaching results, and developed it for that reason. The retreat was a master stroke, no doubt, but neither in this "Diary" nor anywhere else is there proof to be found that the man who made it was another Napoleon, executing with full consciousness of all that it implied an inspired move in the game of European war.

We have spoken of the dulness of much of this work. It is particularly disappointing where Moore's contemporaries are concerned. His sketches of historic figures are not as numerous or as interesting as we had hoped they might be. But here and there a bit of portraiture appears that is worth quoting. Witness, for example, the following glimpse of the court at Palermo in 1807:

For many years Sir John Acton was minister and had the management of affairs. During his administration the Queen had little to say. Some