

Literary News and Criticism.

A Group of Recent Novels by American Authors.

THE PALACE OF DANGER. By Mabel Wagnall. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 311. Funk & Wagnalls Company.

ROSENAH. By Myra Kelly. Illustrated by Wallace Morgan. 12mo, pp. 282. D. Appleton & Co.

THE SILVER CLEEK. By John Campbell Hay. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 226. Mitchell Kennerly.

THE SILVER BUTTERFLY. By Mrs. Wilson Woodrow. Illustrated by Howard Chandler Christy. 12mo, pp. 242. The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

In "The Palace of Danger" the Marquis de Pompadour figures as the central character. The precociousness of her hold upon the affections of her royal lover is due not only to the capriciousness of royal hearts, but also, it appears, to various daring indiscretions on the favorite's part which give abundant occasion for suspicion and jealousy. Such for example, is the secret harporage she affords in an interior apartment of Bellevue to the Comte de Vrie, a rejected suitor. Started in the very midst of his wooing by the entrance of the King, the count had been forced to make his escape by way of a high balcony, and his leap into the shrubbery below had disabled him. Hence the Pompadour's pertious and, hence, too, a most picturesque and sensational imbrogio with Louis, when by accident he discovers the presence of the count in the lady's apartment—the more so that the count had been banished from court and reported as dead. A nice predicament this for La Pompadour, who, after long estrangement, has but just regained her sway over the King; and it would be hard to invent a better reason for her deliverance than the one provided by Miss Wagnall. It is a pity that she should not possess, along with facility of invention, the dash and dramatic élan of a born story teller. There is good material in "The Palace of Danger." There is a gay court, torn between two loves; there is a stable boy who bears a most deceptive resemblance to him, save for the fact that it is spoken word will certainly betray him; there is a demure danseuse freshly out of St. Cyr, who wears the embroidered kerchief of her cavalier round her fair young neck (there hangs a tale); there is a faithful squire, Le Moyné, whose devotion to his stricken master is paid for with a great price, and behind all is the frivolous, kaleidoscopic, intriguing life of the court of Louis Quinze. It may be due to the author's scrupulousness that her narrative seems never to take wings and fly. She is sadly in error if she deems it meritorious to make the main features of her tale correspond exactly with the dates of the chronological chart which she thoughtfully appends. Convenience is a distinct impediment when it comes to storming the gates of romance; and we trust that before she makes another assault she will have buried it ten fathoms deep.

A FAMILY RECORD.

Life in Paris in the Early Victorian Period.

MEMOIRS OF A VANISHED GENERATION. 1812-1855. Edited by Mrs. Warrenne Blake. With an Introduction by the Lady St. Helier. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. 308. John Lane Company.

The domestic life of a well-bred British family in the first half of the last century may not have had anything very exciting in it, but nevertheless an unpretentious and artless picture of it set down in private letters and diaries is an invaluable offering to the social historian of future years. How did people think and act in the days of our great-grandfathers? What were their sentiments, their habits, their prejudices, their daily tasks and daily amusements? In this book the family of Thomas Knox, first Earl of Ranfurly, is made to live before us, and we are translated into a period which in many directions was curiously unlike our own. In nothing was it more unlike than in the relations of parents and children. The sternest discipline was compatible with the deepest affection. The youngsters stood in the presence of their elders, and always addressed them as "Sir" and "Madam." Mrs. Blake's grandmother, Jane Hope Vere, the wife of Edmund Knox, was in her early youth handed over by her father and mother to the care of a Mrs. Hamilton, a cousin of Mrs. Hope Vere, and until she married was the uncomplaining victim of her married temper guardian's ruthless tyranny, apparently she never thought of complaint, rebellion or escape. Stately dignity in her, though it did not deaden his children's feeling for him, though it repressed demonstration. "Edmond adores and reveres his father," wrote Jane soon after her marriage; and in truth the family affection revealed in these letters was a beautiful and noble thing. It is recorded that Lord Ranfurly's delight was to gather his four sons and their wives and children around him, and that their lives together were most harmonious. In one particular the young people were obliged to be on their guard—the old gentleman would not suffer slang in those about him. "One of his granddaughters," Mrs. Blake says, "who carelessly said in his presence that she did not care a button" received a rebuke so severe that it became a tradition in the family."

Lord Ranfurly lived for many years in Paris; thither, too, went Captain Edmond Knox and his wife in order to educate their daughters. English people of standing whose incomes were not large were, in those days, apt to adopt that plan, for Paris was then a comparatively inexpensive place for study and entertainment. The greater part of the letters in this volume were penned there, and they describe not only the cheerful and affectionate family life with its homely details, but many excursions into society. The daughters of the house worked at their accomplishments with a vigor which insured them the happiest occupations all their lives. One of Lord Ranfurly's protégées, by the way, who lived in his house, was a gifted young Irish musician, George Osborne. Straightway does that name bring up the close of a chapter in "Vanity Fair" and its sound as of solemn music: "No more fring was heard at Brussels—the pursuit rolled miles away. Darkness came down on the field and city; and Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart." It was the young Irishman who gave a name to the soldier. Thackeray in his life in Paris had met and formed a friendship with Osborne. "I want a name for my hero," said the novelist one day when thinking about the book to come. "Why not call him George Osborne?" said the musician, and George Osborne it was, though little Amelia's husband bore no resemblance in character to Thackeray's friend.

Despite their years in the City of Light and their happiness there, the Knox family remained almost as insular as most of their countrymen. "There was a report," writes Captain Edmond's daughter Elizabeth to her soldier brother in Canada, "that the heiress of the Pellev Islands was going to be married to Monsieur de Noailles. But I have heard since that her father would rather see his daughter dead at his feet than married to a Frenchman. Uncle James says that he would rather see Emily the wife of an English hatter than a French duke. I cannot say that I should like either." The young Elizabeth saw as few attractions in America as in France's house. She went to a ball at General Cass's house, and remarks that she was "very much amused with the unusual appearance of the Americans, who certainly do not seem blest with what Byron

calls the fatal gift of beauty. Never," she adds, "did I see such a collection of plain faces as there were among the men. As to the ladies, I was rather disappointed, as I had heard a great deal of American beauty." Elizabeth's Uncle James Knox was in Florence just then, and admired the Florentines as little as the girl admired Americans. He went to court with his wife and was presented to the sovereign. "The Grand Duke is so very shy," writes Elizabeth to her brother, "that he is quite miserable for two or three days before the presentation at the idea of having to speak to so many strangers. All the refreshments they give at court consist of hot orangeade and snow and water! instead of ice, the latter not being allowed in Lent. Uncle James was so bored with his evening that he vows he will never go to court again." During the years of the family's life in Paris many important events took place, the least notable of which were the trial of Prince Louis Napoleon, the building of the barricades in 1846, the abdication of Louis Philippe and the proclamation of the republic. There are some references but not many to these happenings in Captain Knox's letters to the son whose military career was beginning, but those letters were chiefly filled with domestic news, mingled occasionally with good advice and quaint suggestion. He would have the youth give thought to his manners. "Those little attentions to the females," he observes, "which distinguish l'homme bien né from the roturier must not be neglected." A favorite maxim of the good man is worth remembering in an extravagant period: "Nothing is cheap when you don't want it."

There are many portraits in this volume, one of the most interesting of which is that of Mrs. Edmond Knox's long time friend, "Vathek" Beckford's daughter, the Duchess of Hamilton. Her husband was that Duke of Hamilton who long after the wearing of wigs had ceased to be fashionable still adhered to his periwig. It was his daily appearance on Rotten Row wearing this wig and riding a thoroughbred Arabian that, as Lady St. Helier tells us, suggested the well known saying: "Is that a high spirited nobleman on a long tailed horse, or a long tailed nobleman on a high spirited horse?"

THE PUNCH PAGEANT.

Two Generations of Humorists—A Whispering Gallery.

The "Punch" pageant is a serious attempt to denote the origin and development of a national institution. At the Leicester Galleries there are over six hundred drawings and nearly two hundred objects to illustrate the continuous progress of a comic journal in the course of sixty-eight years and the associations of a vivacious band of privileged jesters. The deal table which inspired Thackeray's "Mahogany Tree" is uncovered, so that the initials of the humorous knights can be seen; the drawings and souvenirs are catalogued with as much painstaking care as the collections in the National Gallery; Mr. Seaman carries out some verses, and Mr. Lucas, in a "foreword," throws off this characteristic joke: "Punch," of course, is not so good as it was, that is understood; but, having granted that (as we all so readily do) how good 'Punch' is, none the less! That quip produces the designed effect of starting discussion on the literary and artistic merits of the weekly register of satire and pleasantry and the precise period when decadence set in.

Since there is no letter press to be read and only the pictures on the walls to be compared, it is an easy undertaking to decide whether "Punch" has fallen behind its best achievements. There is little doubt that it has done so in two respects—the pictorial denotation of political situations and social satire directed against affectations and follies of fashionable life. Mr. Linley Sambourne, Mr. Bernard Partridge and Mr. Raven Hill can draw effective cartoons, but their work does not stand out like Sir John Tenniel's on these walls. They may lack situations and subjects, but they do not succeed in getting as much fun out of politics as he did, nor are they armed with his resources of power in forcing home the ironies of public life. Cartoons such as "Empress and Earl," "The Sphinx is Silent," "The Pas de Deux," from the grand Anglo-Turkish ballet d'action; "The Political Ruse," "Too Late," and "Dropping the Pilot" are alike masterly as accurate summaries of situations and as forcible examples of legitimate satire. As Leech and Doyle had not approached these cartoons in brilliancy and effectiveness, so Sambourne and Partridge have not rivalled them, versatile as they are as craftsmen. Tenniel's principal subjects, Gladstone and Disraeli, were superior to the chief figures of current caricature, and he caught inspiration from them. Possibly he was not so strictly non-partisan as he ought to have been, for the nobility of Gladstone's nature was almost invariably revealed, whereas his Disraeli was always an insouciant, satirizing juggler, essentially un-English in spirit, and filling the cup of Oriental enchantments until it was brimming over.

In social satire Du Maurier was unrivalled. As one makes the tour of the central room he looks in at Mrs. Ponsonby de Tomkyn's days at home, witnesses the social aspirations of Pethliethwaite, Maudie and Mrs. Cinnabre Brown and the ecstasies of an ineffable youth over a Fra Porcinello Barbiarigianno; watches the Hon. Fitz-Lavender Belairs reading a little thing of his own to a circle of weak-minded but sympathetic women, and enjoys the satire of many other scenes in semi-sart society, with its affectations, feeble fashions and pretensions. Alack! Du Maurier has had no successor. Mr. Raven Hill has followed Keene and Phil May in portraying the humors of low life, and there is no trained artist to keep an eye on the silly fads of the middle class and to satirize them with caustic wit. When these reservations have been made, there is evidence in this gallery that the traditions of "Punch" have been honored and that there has been continuous progress in the art of illustrating the comic side of political and social life. Mr. Sambourne draws with refinement of line, and his cartoons are compositions of exquisite finish. Mr. Bernard Partridge has even greater force and a broader style, and his cartoons are among the most decorative which have appeared in "Punch." They have been reinforced by Mr. E. T. Reed, a master of burlesque, whose work has marked individuality and distinction. About seventy-five artists, living, retired and dead, are represented in this exhibition, and they form a school of caricature which is thoroughly English and as progressive in spirit as it is sound in method. There has been no departure from the oldtime practice of representing political situations with entire truthfulness. The full page illustrations are unalloyed equal zest by men of all parties. This high-minded neutrality has imparted dignity to "Punch" and made it a national institution. The draftsmen have saved the situation even when the letter press has been dull, the jesting trivial and stale, and the book reviews, notices of plays, summaries of Parliament and other stock features lacking in vivacity. Yet while "Punch" might be funnier and fresher than it is, it has not lost the literary character impressed upon it by Thackeray, Jerrold and Hood. The standards are higher under Mr. Seaman's editorship than they were during the closing years of Sir Francis Burnand's direction.

The sympathetic visitor finds much to interest him in this unique collection. There are three of Thackeray's drawings and several of his letters. There are pages from "Punch" showing the opening of Jerrold's first cartoon, Hood's "Song of the Shirt," and the famous amendment to those thinking of matrimony. There are

Lemon's pipe, gold locket and silver inkstand; a block of Leech's first drawing as cut by Landells and the last pencil used by him; Keene's and Du Maurier's sketchbooks; Tenniel's silver tobacco box; five-minute sketches by Phil May, a letter from Hood to Dickens, and portraits or busts of Mayhew, Leech, Hood, Thackeray, Jerrold, Doyle, Keene, Tom Taylor, Tenniel, Sambourne and Owen Seaman. There is the original charter of the comic journal, with signatures of the five partners; there is the prospectus of the first number; there are the six covers, Doyle's being so good that another will never be required; there is the first cartoon; there are scores of drawings of woody Mr. Punch in various characters, the most benevolent and humorous being the old man thinking, "as he sits in his oaken chair"; and there is a library of comic annuals and literature, with Mr. Spielmann's history in four volumes as the most authoritative and luxurious record of the most prosperous syndicate of fun in existence. It is indeed an inspiring pageant which the old Italian marionette has ordered for the entertainment of Londoners. In place of the stick for beating a faithful dog is the magic wand for revealing two generations of social and political England; and the boards of the puppet show are transformed into a whispering gallery, where the merry voices of gentle humorists and warm hearted artists can be heard as they gather around the "Mahogany Tree." I. N. F.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Current Talk of Things Present and to Come.

Mr. E. F. Benson has written a new novel which he calls "The Osbornes." The serial publication of it will begin next July.

The autobiography of J. D. Rockefeller is to be published in several European countries in the languages of those regions. In Paris it is to appear in "Le Matin."

Mr. Fielding Hall, whose book "The Soul of a People" has been so justly admired, has written a novel with the curious title of "One Immortality." It is issued to-day by Macmillan.

In the just published volume of papers by Lecky is quoted with approval this saying of Carlyle:

He once said to me that two great curses seemed to him eating away the heart and worth of the English people. One was drink. The other was the comic oratory, which accustomed men to say without shame what they did not in their hearts believe to be true, and accustomed their hearers to accept such a proceeding as perfectly natural.

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BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

BARTHOLOMEW DE LAS CASAS. His Life, His Apostolate and His Writings. By Francis Augustus Knolly. 472. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

A life of the sixteenth century historian of Spanish America, who devoted missionary and defensive of the Indian.

THE FASHIONABLE ADVENTURES OF JOSEPH CRAIG. By David Graham Phillips. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 365. (D. Appleton & Co.)

The story of a Western man's introduction to the Washington society.

OPEN HOUSE. By Juliet Wilbur Tompkins. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 278. (The Baker & Taylor Company.)

The story of a doctor and his friends and patients.

CAPTAIN MARGARET. A romance. By John Masson. 12mo, pp. 406. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.)

A story of privateers and adventurers in Colonial days.

THREE MISS GRAEMES. By S. Macnaughtan. 12mo, pp. 246. (F. P. Dutton & Co.)

A story of three charming Scotch girls.

DREAMING RIVER. By Barr Moses. 12mo, pp. 282. (F. P. Dutton & Co.)

A romantic story of life on a Western prairie.

CHECKERBERRY. By Lucretia S. MacDonald. 12mo, pp. 278. (Cochrane Publishing Company.)

The story of a little orphan.

COMRADES. A Story of Social Adventure in California. By Thomas Dixon, Jr. Illustrated by C. D. Williams. 12mo, pp. 304. (New York: Page & Co.)

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A story of American politics in which John Calhoun plays the hero.

THE SPELL. By William Dana Orcutt. Illustrated by Gertrude Berman Hammond. R. I. 12mo, pp. 356. (Harper & Bros.)

A story of married life.

ONE IMMORTALITY. By H. Fielding Hall. 12mo, pp. 263. (The Macmillan Company.)

The story of a great love.

JUVENILE.

IN CAPTIVITY IN THE PACIFIC, OR IN THE LAND OF THE BREAD-FRUIT TREE. By Edwin J. Houston. P. D. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 422. (Grafton & Rowland.)

Relating the adventures of two boys who are taken prisoners by savages of the Marquesas Islands.

LITERATURE.

THE ANCIENT GREEK HISTORIANS. (Harvard Lectures.) By J. B. Bury. Litt. D., LL. D. 8vo, pp. xx + 312. (The Macmillan Company.)

MISCELLANEOUS.

DRUGGING A NATION. The Story of China and the Opium Trade. A Personal Investigation. During Extended Tour in the Present Condition of the Opium Trade in China and its Effects Upon the Nation. By S. M. D. (Globe Book Co., 12mo, pp. 215. (Plimden H. Revell Company.)

BEVERAGES, PAST AND PRESENT. An Historical Sketch of the History of the Art of Drinking. A Study of the Customs Connected with Their Use. By Edward R. Emerson. In two volumes. 8vo, pp. vi + 800. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

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REMINISCENCES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN. By Douglas H. Burton. New and revised edition. 8vo, pp. xiv + 428. (Harper & Bros.)

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