

NOV.

BY WILLIAM H. DAVIES.

When I was in yon town, and had
Stones all around me, hard and cold,
My flesh was firm, my sight was keen,
And still I felt my heart grow old.
But now, with this green world around,
By my great love for it! I swear,
Though my flesh shrink, and my sight fail,
My heart will not grow old with care.
When I do hear these joyful birds,
I cannot sit with my heart dumb;
I cannot walk among these flowers,
But I must help the bees to hum.
My heart has echoes for all things,
The wind, the rain, the bird and bee;
'Tis I that—now—can carry Time,
Who in that town must carry me.
I see not now the great coke fire
With ten men seated there, or more,
Like frogs on logs; and one man fall
Dying across the boarded floor.
I see instead the flowers and clouds,
I hear the rills, the birds and bees;
The squirrel flies before the storm
He makes himself in leafy trees.

The New-York Tribune

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1909.

More than a hundred years ago, on March 2, 1800, to be exact, there died at Calcutta the Rose Whitworth Aylmer who was beloved of Walter Savage Landor and inspired him to write one of the most exquisite elegies in the language. We must quote it once more:

Alas, what avails the sceptred race,
What the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine,
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see.
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

To the epitaph on the tomb of this maiden, cut off in her twentieth year, there has long been appended a passage from Young's "Night Thoughts," but a letter in "The Athenaeum" states that through the intervention of Lady Graves Sawle, whose mother was Rose Aylmer's half-sister, a new tablet has been affixed just beneath the old epitaph, bearing Landor's poem and his name. In any circumstances this act would be appreciated, but it is peculiarly gratifying in view of what Swinburne wrote, not long before his last illness, when he was consulted as to a point in the text of the poem. He said incidentally that Landor held Young's "Night Thoughts" in especial abhorrence.

It is an old story that amongst all the trials of authors there is none so heartrending as that through which they pass when they see their books reviewed. It is true that in spite of their full knowledge of the ignorance and turpitude of reviewers, they themselves deliberately hand their masterpieces over to those wicked men, on the explicit understanding that the latter are to discourse upon them, preferably at great length. They are buoyed up, presumably, by the naïve hope that sometime, somewhere, a critic miraculously endowed with both honesty and intelligence may by some accident turn up. To their rescue now comes Mr. Andrew Lang, that fertile genius, with this bold declaration of an idea that has doubtless floated about in many minds:

It has often occurred to me that a literary weekly in which authors should review their own books would be a valuable boon to our culture. In the first place the authors of novels could not puff themselves nearly so noisily as do many of their reviewers. [Why not?] Not that these critics have been "pouched," as Shelley, when a schoolboy, wanted to pouch—that is, tip them. That idea is impossible. The truth is that the reviewers of batches of novels have not much knowledge of literature, have a very low standard of excellence, and are extremely good natured young people. The authors, again, would, if honest, reread their own books, and discover all the blunders which they neglected in reading their proof sheets. I had once to review a volume of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" anonymously, and chastised myself for an egregious blunder which I found on rereading a paper of my own. But the editor of the "Encyclopaedia," Professor Robertson Smith, was quite cross with me for my honorable conduct; I never could understand why.

Here is a golden opportunity. "The Self-Rolling Log-Roller" should be founded at once.

It will be a pity if no arrangements are made for the publication in book form of the letters of Tourgenieff which have been appearing serially in the London "Saturday Review." They are not of transcendent value, but, as the occasional quotations we have made have shown, they give some delightful glimpses of his mind and character. Particularly interesting are those passages in the correspondence which illustrate his courage and even gaiety in the face of approaching death. We learn, too, from these souvenirs, more about his loyalty as a friend, his affectionate generosity. In the letters to Rodenberg, Auerbach and Zabel, which bring the series to a close, there are striking examples of his care for the details of literary craftsmanship, instances of the solicitude with which he overhauled the translations made from his works and sought to promote their accuracy. Characteristic, too, and full of suggestion for the author, is this dignified reply to Zabel, who seems to have asked him for information about himself: "As to my biography, the principal dates, birth, etc., are pretty well known, and the remaining details have no interest for the public—they consist of nothing but purely personal matters, and are quite unnecessary for an estimate of my literary activity, which is the principal aim of your work." There speaks the true artist

NEW YORK.

Books on the City and the Heroes of the Hudson.

THE NEW NEW YORK. A Commentary on the Place and the People. By John C. Van Dyke. Illustrated by Joseph Pennell. 8vo, pp. xv, 425. The Macmillan Company.

DUTCH NEW YORK. By Esther Singleton. With Numerous Illustrations. 8vo, pp. xxiii, 369. Dodd, Mead & Co.

HENRY HUDSON. A Brief Statement of His Aims and Achievements. By Thomas A. Janvier. To which is added a newly discovered partial record, now first published, of the trial of the mutineers by whom he and others were abandoned to their death. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. xiii, 148. Harper & Bros.

ROBERT FULTON AND THE CLERMONT. The authoritative story of Robert Fulton's early experiments, persistent efforts and historic achievements. Containing many of Fulton's hitherto unpublished letters, drawings and pictures. By Alice Crary Sutcliffe, great-granddaughter of the inventor. 8vo, pp. xv, 357. The Century Company.

THE PICTURESQUE HUDSON. Written and Illustrated by Clifton Johnson. (Picturesque River Series.) 12mo, pp. xi, 227. The Macmillan Company.

These books are all especially welcome at this time. Countless visitors to the city and no small number of dwellers here are asking ques-

place of truth. Perhaps his air of critical detachment is carried, on occasion, a shade too far. For example, he develops with altogether too free a hand the familiar notion that there are too many apartment houses and hotels in New York for an ideal of "home" to flourish here. There are probably more homes, using the word in its best sense, in New York than Mr. Van Dyke is aware of, and similarly we believe that the heterogeneous style of interior decoration which he justly enough criticises is affected by a smaller proportion of householders than is suggested by his remarks on the subject. On the other hand, nothing could be truer or more wholesome than this observer's insistence upon the democratic and commercial elements in New York as the crucial factors in its growth as an organism, nothing could be juster than the emphasis which he places upon character in his search for beauty.

He finds beauty, plenty of it, but not by closing his eye to skyscrapers or pretending that they look like something else. "Why is it," he asks, "that people seek here the Place de la Concorde, or the Ringstrasse, or Trafalgar Square?" If he blames our architects for anything it is for their tendency to design their buildings, public and private, as though for a European environment. He would have them take more account of the spirit of New York. He is himself a faithful interpreter of that spirit, and thus his book should make profitable reading for the

curious indeed to our modern sense of things. Witness the following passage:

Servitude in New Netherland was not regarded as demeaning. The mistress and servant were very frequently the daughter of somebody in the station in the community was equal to that of the mistress. In a new country every extra pair of hands was valuable, and when a household had more children than were required to do the work afforded by his own occupation and his home he hired them out to others. When the indentured were signed the chief parental rights passed to the employer. Sometimes the son or daughter took service for a short time only, but more often for a term of years. If the children were not properly treated the parents or guardians would apply to the court, which seems to have been quick enough to remedy any real case of abuse, neglect or cruelty. If the child absented himself or herself from the mansion, even if only to visit parents, without permission from the master, it constituted a breach of the engagement.

Children would appear to have had, in fact, a status hardly superior to that of a slave. One instance cited by Miss Singleton shows a father bequeathing his five children to a friend, on the understanding that the recipient of the gift may "put out to whom he thinks fit" those of the children he does not care to keep, provided he does not assign any of them to the father's kindred or to the kindred of his wife! The school days of the youngsters must have been a time of torment. The master had authority to administer the severest discipline, and, says the author, we read of "leather cushions with tacks pointed upwards on which unruly girls were placed; and of girls being beaten, kicked and bruised." Yet, when all is said, the people of Dutch New York were a jolly lot, heavy handed and none too lofty in their ideals, but very friendly, human creatures, to use Carlyle's phrase. Miss Singleton seeks to counteract rather unfortunate impression of them perpetuated by Irving and others, and to show that the average seventeenth century Knickerbocker was not "an uncivilized boor." If she does not wholly rehabilitate the type, she at any rate makes it a little more sympathetic.

Mr. Janvier's little book, scrupulously careful in its assembling of facts, is made the more interesting through the author's eager response to the romantic appeal which lies in the history of Henry Hudson. He quotes that famous entry in the great seaman's log, the one about the mermaid seen by Thomas Hilles and Robert Rayner. A beautiful creature she was, "her skin very white, and long hair hanging down behinde of colour blacke," and, continues the thrilling narrative, "in her going downe they saw her tayle of a porposse, and speckled like a macrell." Lucky Hilles! Lucky Rayner! And surely no reader of imagination would accept for a moment the comment of the wooden Asher, "Probably a seal." Mr. Janvier waves the skeptic away. "For my own part," he says, "I much prefer to believe in the mermaid—and by believing, to create in my own heart somewhat of the feeling which was in the hearts of those old seafarers in a time when sea-prodiges and sea-mysteries were to be counted with as among the perils of every ocean voyage." It is in this apt vein that he concisely relates the leading events in Hudson's career, indicating his relations with his employers, demonstrating the validity of his claim as discoverer of the Hudson as against that of Verrazzano, and describing his tragic end in the Far North alike with refreshing brevity and clearness and with a lively, almost dramatic, touch. The new documents he introduces are of no great moment. They lend a little more color to the hypothesis that Hudson might have been wiser in his dealings with the mutineers at whose hands he suffered, but the full story of that dark business still remains to be told. In any case it is not as a weighty contribution to Hudson literature that this book is presented. It is a modest popular sketch. As such it is to be commended.

The author of "Robert Fulton and the Clermont" is, like Mr. Janvier, an unpretentious chronicler, and, like him, she serves a useful purpose. This book about her famous ancestor is exactly the book that is wanted just now, sufficient in its biographical data, enriched by divers new items in text and picture, and written with that warmth of emotion which befits the exceptional occasion. Mrs. Sutcliffe is particularly happy in her treatment of the charm residing in Fulton's personality. The scientist receives due honor in her book, but she is at pains to show us the man, to make us realize his high courage, his gaiety, his gentleness, and, in a word, his thoroughly lovable character. No wonder Barlow and Livingston were ready to aid him! No one could have resisted a man so sincere, so zealous, so cheerful in the face of discouragement. There is a beautifully characteristic letter here, written in 1803, when Fulton was experimenting with his boat in France. It was sent to his friend Skipwith, whose first child had been born not long before, and very prettily he turns that circumstance to his whimsical aim. The letter runs as follows:

My dear friend: You have experienced all the anxiety of a fond father, on a child's coming into the world. So have I. The little cherub now plump as a partridge, advances to the perfection of her nature and each day presents some new charm. I wish mine may do the same. Some weeks hence, when you will be sitting in one corner of the room and Mrs. Skipwith in the other, learning the little creature to walk, the first unsteady step will scarcely balance the tottering frame; but you will have the pleasing perspective of seeing it grow to a steady walk and then to dancing. I wish mine may do the same. My boy, who is all bones and corners, just like his daddy, and whose birth has given me much uneasiness, or rather, anxiety,—is just learning to walk, and I hope in time he will be an active runner. I therefore have the honor to invite you and the ladies to see his first movements on Monday next from 6 till 9 in the evening, between the Barre des Bons Hommes and the steam engine. May our children, my friend, be an honor to their country and a comfort to the gray hairs of their dotting parents.

Fulton could not persuade the French to give



CORNELIS STEENWYCK, AN OLD DUTCH MAYOR OF NEW YORK.
(From the painting by Van Goosen, including a view of New Amsterdam.)

tions about Henry Hudson and Robert Fulton, and incidentally New York itself is an object of peculiar curiosity to thousands. The authors of the books now at hand offer really helpful guidance. For the stranger it would be hard to devise a better volume than the one Mr. Van Dyke has written. Indeed, he would seem to have had such a reader in mind, even to the point of calling travelling trunks "boxes," for his quicker understanding. Yet the most experienced native, while protesting that Mr. Van Dyke has undertaken to tell him a twice told tale, could scarcely fail to be interested in these pages, if only for the reason that they are marked by such uncommon common sense. It is a comfort to see New York described by one who has a true sense of its character. The sensation is not to be enjoyed every day.

The broad scheme of Mr. Van Dyke's book is by itself deserving of praise. He accompanies his supposititious pilgrim up the bay and ingeniously unfolds to him that first astounding spectacle which the city offers to a foreign eye. Then, in the same artful but seemingly casual manner, he talks about our weather, so that the newcomer may be prepared for almost any of the city's moods, and in the chapters that follow, each in just the appropriate place, he exposes every significant detail in the urban physiognomy from Wall Street to Fifth avenue, from the skyscraper to the small park, from the hurrying crowds in the regions of business to the subtler "movements" which give us our buildings and determine our social habits. It is a more or less philosophical analysis that the author sets forth, but the philosophy is never pedantically asserted, it comes out in matter-of-fact fashion in descriptions of things seen. Most gratifying of all is the author's refusal to sentimentalize his theme, to put enthusiasm in the

New Yorker as well as for the outsider. Mr. Pennell's illustrations are clever, but not wholly convincing. Neither the colored reproductions nor those which are printed in black and white convey an adequate impression of the atmospheric conditions in New York, and the artist's draftsmanship, though not precisely scamped, wants the finesse which he has so often shown. Much better results might have been obtained if he had used the pen, aiming at those vivid, crisp effects made familiar in a host of brilliant architectural sketches from his hand.

In passing from Mr. Van Dyke's book to Miss Singleton's the reader is on the same soil, but the transition he makes is really as from one country to another. The break is not alone a matter of periods; it is a matter of race. Our Dutch forefathers created on the shores of the New World a social fabric made to resemble as closely as possible the one they had left behind them in Holland. The picture which Miss Singleton draws has the solidity and color of one based on an ancient civilization—sharply accented by the light and shade inseparable from pioneering conditions. It is very entertaining to study in these well filled but lightly handled chapters the contrast between New Netherlandish customs and manners. The settlers were a snug people, fond of their richly furnished homes and handsome dress, but, for all their piety, much to seek in their daily walk and demeanor. In 1646, says Miss Singleton, one in every four of the inhabitants of New Amsterdam was a liquor seller. The men were portentous drinkers, and the women, though industrious souls and the neatest of housekeepers, found their chief pleasure, we are told, in gossip and slander.

Domestic sentiment flourished, of course, but it was compatible with practices which must seem