

DAYBREAK.

I saw the dawn break faltering on the tide,
That long, torn tide of rayless winter sea.
Oh, how it breathes of barrenness to me:
I saw the dawn upon it, dead and wide—
And wished that never might the daylight be.
I longed to burrow in the dark and hide
From light—from light, and its keen surgery;
I turned upon my pillows, and I cried:
How lifelong weary are those stairs it seems
That we must climb like bathers from the night,
Leaving the sluggish waters of our dreams
Warm and star-broken, while we face the white,
The trembling, speechless day of all our pain.
O Death, resembling night, return again!

The New-York Tribune.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 1910.

Referring in this place last week to Mr. Andrew Lang's destructive paper on Mr. Edgumbe's indictment of Mrs. Chaworth-Musters, in "Byron: The Last Phase," we expressed the wish that he might write the definitive study of the poet and his career which he is so peculiarly well qualified to produce. The suggestion moves a valued correspondent of this journal to make a communication of warm approval. "Let us have," says this sympathetic reader, "a plain, practical, sensible book about Byron, written by a man who has imagination enough to understand him," and the rather energetic appeal continues as follows:

Scandal-mongers have had their innings too long. Mrs. Stowe's ill-omened attack inspires wonder that a good woman could have lent herself to the exploitation of such nastiness—and when, mark you, Lady Byron had nothing to gain from spreading a scandal about the long-dead man of genius who had the misfortune to marry her. If anything could be more unpleasant than the matter of Mrs. Stowe's composition it is its manner. It has the obsequious tone of one much too deeply impressed by the fact that she had been received in intimacy by a Person of Title. Bah! It's a curious phase of the subject that all the later defenders of Lady Byron have succeeded only in making her seem more and more unlovely. I remember that a woman who had known her well all their lives together once said to Harness, "If Lady Byron has a heart it is deeper seated and harder to get at than anybody else's heart whom I have ever known." As for her precious grandson, Lord Lovelace, and his vile attack on Byron's memory, let us by all means have Mr. Lang's solution of the problem of that fouling of the man's own nest.

We may not be quite so ferocious on the subject of Byron as is our correspondent, but we would assuredly rejoice to see a definitive biography of him by the accomplished scholar and critic thus urged on to the task.

Turning again to the solemn consideration of the present state of literature in England "The Athenæum" holds an inquest upon the short story, which form of art, it declares, "like a performance on the violin, must be perfect to be enduring." Admitting that "the English writers of to-day who understand the short story as the French understand it may be counted on the fingers of one hand," the critic nevertheless seems to attribute the plethora of unendurable stuff to the editors of the popular magazines. They go in for "strong names," they reject the subtle working out of one fine situation as "neatly enough done, but too slight"; they pander to the current taste for violence and, in short, they give themselves to the printing of "the Literature, or rather the Letterpress, of the Bounder." These oracular disquisitions that "The Athenæum" has recently been printing have more than once astonished us, but in this case the argument is merely irritating. Is it not time to recognize the fact that the lack of perfect short stories, like the lack of perfect poems, is due to nothing more nor less than the lack of genius? It is silly to keep on ascribing the trouble to the magazine editors.

Henry Holt & Co. state that the publication of Mr. De Morgan's new novel, "An Affair of Dishonor," has been postponed for a short time. The date now fixed for its appearance is September 13. Apropos, we note that the English "Bookman" is filled with portraits of the novelist and views of places associated with his career. In a long article Mr. A. St. John Adcock makes a few additions to the slender store of facts which we have relating to his author. He contradicts, by the way, the story that "Joseph Vance" went the rounds of the London publishing houses before it was accepted, saying:

The fact is that when the MS. returned from the first publisher to whom it was offered it was put away in a drawer until accident led to its being shown to another publisher, who read and was so taken with the story that, though he did not see his way to the heavy undertaking of publishing a novel of that unusual length, he carried it off and submitted it to Mr. Heinemann, who accepted it at once. Long as the book remains, it is interesting to know that in its original form it was much longer, and that before it went to press Mr. De Morgan curtailed it, cutting away some of Lossie's letters near the beginning, and removing quite a considerable incident, an account of another love affair of Lossie's sister.

Speaking of "Joseph Vance," we are told that until Mr. De Morgan came to write that book he had never attempted fiction or even thought of doing so. He began it, he says, merely "for a lark, as it were," and it is said that he put the opening chapter aside when it was done "because he thought his indebtedness to Dickens was too palpable to be allowed to pass."

ITALIAN ENGRAVING

The Charm of the Early Chapters in Its History.

CATALOGUE OF EARLY ITALIAN ENGRAVINGS PRESERVED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. By Arthur Mayger Hind, B. A., Assistant in the Department. Edited by Sidney Colvin, M. A., D. Litt., Keeper of the Department. Royal 8vo, pp. liii, 627. London: Printed by Order of the Trustees.

ILLUSTRATIONS TO THE CATALOGUE OF EARLY ITALIAN ENGRAVINGS PRESERVED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. Royal 8vo, pp. xvi. London: Printed by Order of the Trustees.

The compilation of a catalogue of works of art has always been a task agreeable to the man of taste and learning. It gives a kind of added sanction to indulgence in a hobby. He who prepares a good catalogue finds the one perfect opportunity for the expression of his critical views and incidentally performs a useful act. There are catalogues, of course, to be reckoned among Lamb's *biblia-a-biblia*, but there are others which, especially in more recent years, scholarship and enthusiasm have raised to the rank of literature. Of such a character is the work on the early Italian engravings in the British Museum which Mr. Hind and Mr. Colvin have prepared, a work which is not

the urbanity with which Mr. Hind and Mr. Colvin have traversed their rich mass of material, luminously classifying and annotating it and discussing with equal acumen and open-mindedness the questions of attribution with which their field fairly bristles. Particularly admirable in its close reasoning and its clear statement is Mr. Colvin's long introduction, and on the same high plane are those briefer prefaces in which he and Mr. Hind open the different sections of the catalogue. Step by step they carry their subject from the anonymous plates of the fifteenth century down to the period which witnessed the final disappearance of what might be called the primitive tradition and the development of that reproductive school dominated by Marcantonio Raimondi. The latter, of course, is not included in the book. He has nothing in common with the naïve charm belonging to the early Italian engravers.

It is for this charm that the lover of prints will always reserve a special appreciation, finding, as he does, in the Italian masters a delight impossible to associate with Dürer, say, though that Northern genius was immeasurably their superior in technique. As Mr. Colvin says, Italian engravings look amateur-like in comparison with German, but, he justly adds, "they have a singular charm of their own; the special charm of the early Italian Renaissance; of the commixture, now harmoni-



PROFILE BUST OF A YOUNG WOMAN.
(From an engraving of the school of Leonardo.)

to blend their fancy with simple realism is by itself a positive fountain of joy. It gives to their work a subtly appealing quality, touching us with a sense of young and sweet and flower-like things. The figures are sometimes realized truthfully enough, but, possibly from the formal handling of the draperies, these images, though lifelike, have at the same time a beguiling other-worldliness about them. It is plain that, whether from the stubbornness of the engraver's mode of expression or not, artists of the first rank were generally deterred from adopting it.

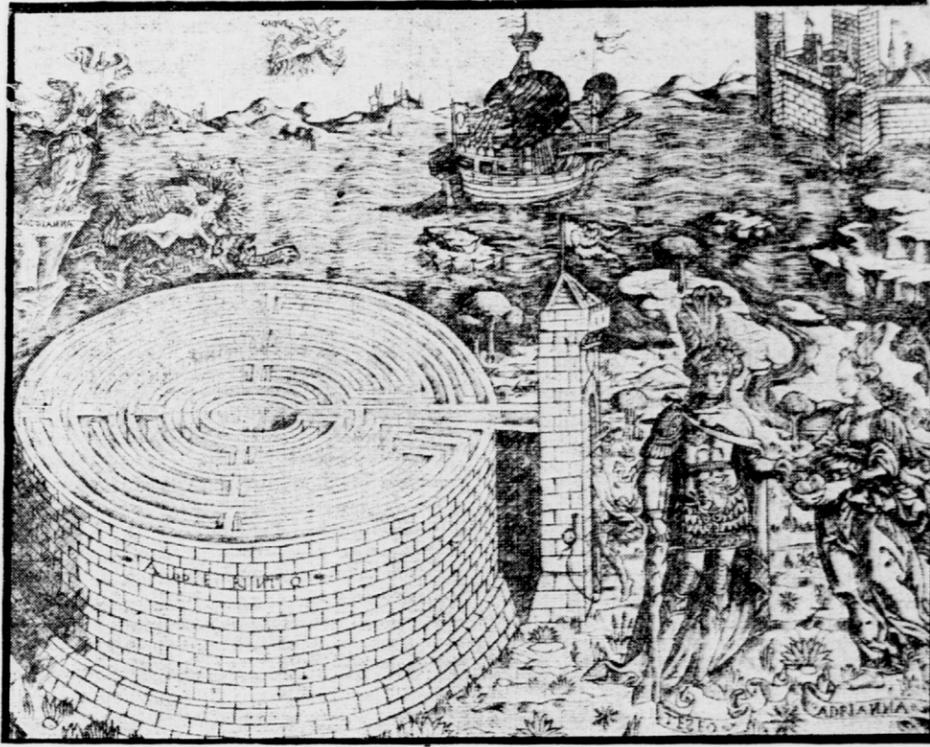
There were two resplendent exceptions to the rule. Pollaiuolo and Mantegna both left plates of the highest beauty and power. The former, in his single engraving, the famous "Battle of Naked Men," produced not only a characteristically brilliant study of the nude but a piece of technique brimming over with vigor and with the precious quality of style. As for Mantegna, to whom Mr. Hind and Mr. Colvin assign without question seven of the plates which have been attributed to him, he would seem to have labored with the engraver's tool as sympathetically as with the brush, and clearly with the same authority. Take, for example, his "Entombment," a fragment of which we reproduce. It is one of his noblest triumphs, both in respect to emotional expression and the majestic sculptural representation of form. The universality of Leonardo suggests that he practised engraving as he practised everything else, but the editors of this work can trace neither documentary nor traditional evidence that he ever actually executed a plate. That his influence told, however, here as in so many other directions, is obvious from the exquisite "Profile Bust of a Young Woman," which is attributed to a member of his school. Based unmistakably upon a design of his, it is at least conceivable, as the editors say, that it may be an original work of the master's. Bramante, too, is another outstanding figure who has been connected with the art of the engraver, though it is probable that the large and very interesting "Interior of a Ruined Church or Temple," which bears his signature, was designed by him and not placed upon the copper by his hand.

From these salient monuments in the history of early Italian engraving, sparse souvenirs of a few men of supreme ability, we may pass to a group which if less imposing has, on the other hand, something like veritable witchery. This is the group which embraces Jacopo de' Barbari, Girolamo Mocetto, Benedetto Montagna and the two Campagnolas. In Jacopo's suavely drawn nudes, warmly touched by the influence of Dürer, in the gay fancies of Montagna, in the poetic conceptions and soft touch of Giulio Campagnola, you are aware of all the candor and grace of the Renaissance, of all the tender freshness characteristic of the great artistic movement in its dawning years. Pollaiuolo and Mantegna alone were comparable to Dürer in giving to engraved line the originality and distinction in which it reaches its highest fulfillment; but to most of the craftsmen enumerated in this catalogue there was granted a measure of that magic of art which will vitalize even the most immature design. To follow Mr. Hind and Mr. Colvin in their descriptions and criticisms is both edifying and enjoyable, for along with the solid information they give us on the relation of niello to engraving, on the difference between the fine manner and the broad manner, on the so-called "Tarocchi Cards of Mantegna," on the true "Tarocchi," on many other such topics and on a score of interesting personalities, there is always the atmosphere of beauty. Decidedly, this formal catalogue is a book to read, a book to serve all those who care for the spirit of early Italian art.

A TEST OF SHAKESPEARE.

From The Spectator.

A friend of father's told me that is the only test to apply in considering which parts of the doubtful plays are genuine. . . . "If you want to read it, it's Shakespeare; and if you don't, it isn't."



THE CRETAN LABYRINTH.

(From an engraving of the school of Maso Finiguerra.)

simply a record of the prints in one of the great collections of the world, but, in its way, a history of a difficult subject. The student may find here, indeed, information more practically serviceable than that embodied in a generalized survey. With the aid of the volume of illustrations he may trace the development of the early engraver's art in the South in its minutest details. These illustrations, by the way, were made a quarter of a century ago, and, as they are therefore not so good as they might have been made by one of the reproductive processes since developed, the editors offer them more or less apologetically. Nevertheless, they answer very well.

As for the text, it would be difficult to praise too warmly the learning, the judgment and

ous and now clashing, of the classical and the medieval spirit and of the inborn instinct for style and beauty, sometimes with childish quaintness, as in many of the minor masters both of Florence and of Northern Italy, sometimes with austere and compelling power, as in the case of masters like Pollaiuolo and Mantegna." The nature of their source he indicates in a passage at once so concise and so comprehensive that we must quote it intact:

Evidently there was not in Italy the same steady and continuous demand for engraved images of piety as existed, from soon after the invention of the art, at the fairs and shrines of pilgrimages in the North. Subjects from the Old and New Testaments and from the lives of the saints were produced not to supply a demand like this, but more often, it would seem, simply to be coloured and applied to the decoration of altar fronts in lieu of original paintings, with a saving both in invention and expense. In like manner the subjects of ornament or fancy engraved in goldsmiths' shops were commonly, it is clear, done for the purpose of being coloured and affixed as ornaments on the lids of ladies' spice-boxes or jewel-boxes or work-boxes. Rude figures from popular life, with alphabets and other decorative inventions in a strained Gothic fancy, fill no such place in early Italian as they do in early Northern engraving. On the other hand, themes taken from literature, like the *Triumphs of Petrarch*, or from the scenes enacted in miracle plays and processions, like the *Sibyls and Prophets*, or from popular astrological belief, like the *Planets*, take an important place beside illustrations of Scripture, even among the cruder and earlier of the prints here catalogued. Subjects of classic fable and mythology are far more common, and Ovid a far more frequent inspirer, than with the engravers of the North. Setting aside the harsh, earnest, and imposing work of Mantegna and his immediate group and the solitary masterpiece of Pollaiuolo, the general impression which these products of the Italian workshops make is one partly of experiment and partly of playfulness, as though the artists (who are with very few exceptions quite of the second rank) were exercising their tools on products intended primarily for their own amusement and that of their public.

There are divers phases of the evolution of technique among these early engravers on which it is tempting to linger, but they are chiefly of concern to the special student, and we will glance simply at one question in particular, that of the exercise of the picture-making faculty. It appears to have been curiously hampered by inexperience. The masterly composition which was to play so large a part in the work of the great painters is only very dimly foreshadowed in the plates of the early engravers. They are ineffably naïve. On the other hand, the very ingenuousness with which they seek



THE DOE AT REST.

(From an engraving by the Master of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist.)