

Literary News and Criticism

A Sheaf of New Stories, Mostly Romantic.

MR. INGLESIDE. By E. V. Lucas. 12mo. pp. 316. The Macmillan Company.

THE LADY OF THE SPUR. By David Potter. Frontispiece by Clarence F. Underwood. 12mo. pp. 225. Philadelphia: The J. B. Lippincott Company.

DEVIOUS WAYS. By Gilbert Cannan. 12mo. pp. 370. Duffield & Co.

THE SWORD MAKER. By Robert Barr. 12mo. pp. 285. The F. A. Stokes Company.

THE GAME OF THE GOLDEN BALL. By Elizabeth and Adrian Johnson. 12mo. pp. 331. New York: The Macaulay Company.

THE HOUSE ON STILTS. By R. H. Hazard. Illustrated by J. A. Lemon. 12mo. pp. 346. The G. W. Dillingham Company.

THE ROSE IN THE RING. By George Barr McCutcheon. Illustrated in colors by A. J. Keller. Dodd, Mead & Co.

In the novel, as in the essay and in that other literary form, if we may call it such, the anthology, Mr. Lucas has developed a mode of his own. It will not do merely to say that he is unconventional, for that, after all, describes many a modern writer. Neither is it enough to say that he is original, since originality may express itself within a formula. Perhaps he may with some accuracy be characterized as a very personal writer, one whose work owes most of its charm to quiet little ways, having no great weight in a technical sense, but always counting heavily in his achievement of success.

Mr. Hazard has brought together in "The House on Stilts" enough sensational and improbable material for half a dozen shilling shockers. The scene is an island in the Caribbean, nominally under the Spanish flag, but the authority of the governor does not extend beyond the settlement on the shore. In the interior a tribe of Voodoo worshipping negroes holds sway under the rule of a yellow queen who is called the Daughter of the Mountain, the said mountain being an active volcano. Among the degraded blacks there is a monastery—the "House on Stilts"—inhabited by an order of silent monks, sun worshippers, supposedly a survival from Aztec days. To this lovely spot there come an American newspaper man and an American detective in search of a fugitive defaulter. They are hospitably received by the American Consul, who has a beautiful daughter. Things begin to happen immediately, mysterious things and violent and treacherous ones, for are there not Spaniards there as well as Voodoo priests? The book falls to produce the illusion that Rider Haggard, for instance, can create with appeals of this kind. It is crude, and appeals only to a most primitive taste in even sensational reading.

Mr. McCutcheon's latest story is somewhat of a departure. American circus life in the '70s, before the "railroad show" had yet been organized, is the background of "The Rose in the Ring," a tale whose plot is too complicated to be outlined here. Suffice it to say that a young F. F. V., wrongly accused of the murder of his grandfather, joins the circus and escapes arrest disguised as a clown. The real murderer is villain number one. But under the canvas of the caravan there lurks villainy, too, as well as kind hearts that are more than coronets—in fact, there are three villains in the proceedings, with a minor colored one for good measure, not to forget a pickpocket who supplies comic relief. He "divvies" with the circus proprietor. The historic cry, "Hey, Rube!" is heard in these pages, in which high devotion to pure womanhood and budding love also have their place and part. It is all in the McCutcheon manner, handily put together, to make most satisfactory reading matter for the multitude. The pictures of the circus life and the kind hearted circus folk are attractively done. But the author would have done well to have chosen another title. He ought not to have skirted so close, especially with a tale of this sort, to one peculiarly beloved by readers of Thackeray.

GOOD TALK

Some Studies in an Art Said To Be Lost.

THE LOST ART OF CONVERSATION. SELECTED ESSAYS, INCLUDING AN INTRODUCTION BY HERBERT S. KRANS. Illustrated. 12mo. pp. xv, 266. The Sturgis & Walton Company.

Is conversation a "lost art"? The prevailing opinion of the period answers in the affirmative, and points to the past to prove its case. Certain forms of conversation certainly no longer flourish, because a changed social and educational environment has done away with them. It is not even doubtful that Dr. Johnson would to-day be surrounded by an impressive isolation in a clubroom, and that Macaulay would be listened to with but half resigned patience. Gladstone, too, would find it difficult in these latter days to establish a reputation as a great conversationalist. Then there was Coleridge, who, too, according to Mme. de Staël, talked and could only talk by monologue. The world has grown impatient of authority, most of all in its drawing rooms and at its dinner tables. That is all. When it transfers itself to a monologue, it transforms him into a lecturer; it raises him to the dignity of an after dinner speaker.

Enough good talk is heard nowadays, even though it be no longer conversation. In the older, set meaning of the word, "Tempora mutantur, et nos cum illis." The spread of general information and the increasing specialization of knowledge alike have forced us to transform the oldtime conversation into something more nearly resembling serious small talk. What once needed oral dissemination, we now get from a multitude of books, the best of monologues yet invented, and the only ones possible. We seek in conversation relief from the strain of life—intellectual relief if possible—certainly not its protraction.

The French have understood this best of all. Therefore they have given the talk of the famous salons its true place, which is now a purely historical one, and adapted their own conversation to the new conditions and demands of an infinitely more variegated life by giving to their small talk more body while losing some of its gossamer grace. It is, indeed, one is inclined to think, the delicate art of small talk that is in danger rather than with them—far more in danger of being lost than is the art of conversation, which is a necessary of life, not one of its adornments.

Still, Mr. Kraus has rendered a genuine social service by bringing together, curiously enough for the first time, the best essays on conversation in the English language. Professor J. P. Mahaffy's paper on "The Principles of the Art,"

continues to be the best practical guide ever penned, with its analytical treatment of the whole subject, and its warning against a formal adherence to the principles and rules laid down. De Quincy, too, goes beyond and below mere generalities. For the rest, Bacon is laid under contribution with his implicit "Of Discourse," Swift gives his "Hints towards an Essay on Conversation," followed by passages from the satirical "Polite Conversation," and Hazlitt and Stevenson furnish the rest of the contents. The book has a purpose, and helpfully carries it out.

MARTIN LUTHER

The Play of His Political Ideas in Modern Life.

THE POLITICAL THEORIES OF MARTIN LUTHER. By Luther Hess Waring. Ph. D. 12mo. pp. vi, 233. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The study of the scope and significance of the life and work of Martin Luther has already yielded a library of such size that but few specialists even can claim familiarity with the whole of it. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the influence of the monk of Wittenberg is felt to this day in the political and social as well as in the religious life of the world, Catholic and Protestant, even though to the majority of us he means exclusively the religious reformer.

Mr. Waring's helpful study of Luther as a political theorist, and of the great extent to which his theories have become axioms of the modern world and state, is the outcome of his preparation for a thesis on the narrower subject of Luther's political reforms of Germany, in part fulfillment of the work required by the George Washington University for the degree of Ph. D. His interest in the wider historical bearing of this phase of Luther's work became inevitably aroused, the result being this book, which testifies to its author's wide and fruitful reading. It is not an original contribution to the study of history; it hardly could be after the thoroughness with which historians have gleaned the field, even though Luther's political influence is still at work, and though some of his ideals have never yet been realized, but it is a thorough, popular compilation from all that is truly illuminating and worth while in the works of these writers. Mr. Waring's bibliography ranges from Aristotle, Cicero, Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine, Marsilius and Dante to Ranke, Bryce and Sidwick.

An historical introduction traces the genesis and development of the medieval theory of the relation of the Church to the State, of the overlordship claimed by the ecclesiastic over the political body, and gives due credit to Luther's predecessors in the development of the modern theory of the state, its powers and functions. A consideration of the political condition of Germany on the eve of the Reformation follows, the theological, ecclesiastical and ethical elements of the movement being kept in view as the original cause, but subordinately to the political and social developments to which they inevitably pointed the way. Mr. Waring leaves his scholarship with enthusiasm for his reforming statesman hero, and thus concludes his study:

The priceless blessings of liberty and the rights of conscience recognized, enjoyed and guaranteed in our own great Republic, and working like heaven among all peoples and all times, are due, directly and indirectly, the result of the truths and principles so clearly and so forcefully proclaimed by Martin Luther nearly four hundred years ago.

TAINE'S EXPERIMENT

An Instance of a Man of Letters Turned Novelist.

Paris, September 24. "Etienne Mayran," the only novel that Hippolyte Taine ever wrote, is now for the first time published by the Librairie des Annales. The story was never completed, but, as it stands, gives a vivid picture of student life in Paris such as was experienced by the author of the "Philosophy of Art." The book is introduced by an essay by M. Paul Bourget. The hero of Taine's novel is a youth of fourteen, extremely intelligent and highly sensitive, who after the death of his father is selected by the director of one of the numerous private academies in Paris, where pupils are prepared for competitive examinations, as a sort of advertisement for the institution. It is a bitter but amusing criticism of high schools where these successful competitive examination pupils are turned out by the "cramming" system and by "tours de force," just as certain skilled mountebanks produce trained acrobats for the circus. The tale is simple, and its pathetic passages have a smack of Dickens. It is well worth reading.

"La Corse d'aujourd'hui," by M. Piero Pobb, is something more than a handbook of Corsica. It is a clever, condensed study of the island. Special attention is given to the social condition of the Corsicans, and to their agricultural, industrial and administrative wants. Corsica is seldom visited by English speaking tourists because of the primitive inns, and fleas, and the danger of bandits, when one ventures into the "maquis," or brush. But now the inns have improved, the roads are fairly good, and living is cheap. M. Pobb's little book gives an excellent analysis of the strange, startling, national character of the people. While doing full justice to their noble qualities, he does not hesitate to point out their vices. Those who intend visiting Corsica would do well to read this instructive booklet.

"Le Chevalier aux Anes," by M. Paul Flaman, might be entitled "In the Footpath of Cervantes." It is a novel, the hero of which enters one night the "posada de la Sangre" and becomes so infatuated with the exploits of Don Quixote that he wanders about for a couple of years visiting all the places mentioned by Cervantes. That this idea is not original, however, may be appreciated by all who have read the excellent work of A. F. Jaecocq, "In the Footprints of Don Quixote," admirably illustrated by the late Daniel Vierge.

C. I. B.

Another Literary Journal is to see the light in London. "The Open Window" it is called, and it is expected to devote itself to "all that is most new, imaginative and adventurous in the young literary art of the day."

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BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Current Talk of Things Present and to Come.

Miss Laura Stedman has completed the biography of her distinguished grandfather, upon which she has long been working, "The Life and Letters of Edmund Clarence Stedman." It is now being printed by Moffat, Yard & Co., who will issue it this season in two elaborately illustrated volumes.

The "Reminiscences of Clara Novello" will be one of the welcome books of the autumn. It is said to give charming glimpses of her early life, when Charles Lamb and other memorable figures in English literature were guests at her father's house, and, of course, the volume contains much about musical people.

There recently died at Orleans a French romancer, M. Louis Bousenard, who won considerable repute through his "Aventures d'un Gamain de Paris." According to the correspondent of "The London Daily Telegraph," he died, literally, of a broken heart. Ere he breathed his last he drew up an invitation to his own funeral, stating the date and the place, and saying that, inconceivable at the death of his wife, he succumbed to his grief. He was in his sixty-third year.

Mr. Israel Zangwill, from whom we have not heard in some time, is bringing out a book of "Italian Fantasies." It treats of such subjects as "Italian Grotesques," "Parvenu Pompeii" and "The Consolation of Phlebotomy."

Print collectors will make a note of the fact that Dr. Harrington has completed a description of the etched work of the late Sir Francis Seymour Hayden. This catalogue will appear with an unusually generous array of illustrations.

Mrs. Hugh Fraser, pleasantly remembered as writer of fiction and chapters of travel, has two illustrated volumes of reminiscences in press. "A Diplomatist's Wife in Many Lands" she calls the book and it may be expected to give us much entertaining gossip of noted people.

The history of the ancient world is more and more coming to be written in brief volumes for the general reader. Two such studies that promise well and that we are to have this winter are Professor T. G. Tucker's "Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul," and Mr. J. Stuart Hay's "The Amazing Emperor Hellogabalus." For the latter book an introduction has been written by Professor J. B. Bury, whose indispensable seven-volume edition of Gibbon, by the way, is just passing through the press again, to emerge with notes augmented and revised, and with many new maps and illustrations.

A work of high interest to readers of American political history is announced by the Scribners in "The Intimate Life of Alexander Hamilton," by his grandson, Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton. The author does not attempt an elaborate presentation of his hero's career as a statesman, but deals more particularly with his relations with his family and friends, his tastes, amusements and methods of work. Use is made of many letters of Hamilton's which have never before been published. The book is to have twenty-five full page illustrations.

Baroness von Hutten, favorably known as the author of "Pam" and "Beechy," has completed another novel, "The Green Patch," is announced by Stokes for early publication.

Students of psychic matters will be interested in the "Studies in Spiritism," by Amy E. Tanner, which D. Appleton & Co. are bringing out. It is the detailed chronicle by Dr. G. Stanley Hall's assistant and coadjutor of their recent sittings with Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Verrall and other famous mediums. Dr. Hall states in the introduction that the book represents "the negative side with reference to the spiritualistic telepathic hypothesis."

Not long ago we expressed surprise at the failure of American publishers to make the most of Mr. Bernard Capes, his "Lake of Wine" was brought out here, it is true, but we do not know that all of his books have appeared in American editions. Evidently his own countrymen are slow to appreciate him. "The Athenaeum" observes that he has never received his due recognition, but has been neglected by public and critics alike, and yet, it is added, "no living writer can draw a soldier of fortune better, and we know of no historical novel of recent years better than 'A Jay of Italy.'" Mr. Capes' new Italian tale, "The Love Story of Saint Bel," relating to the time of St. Catherine of Siena, is also a delightful book.

One of Mr. Austin Dobson's best books is his memoir of Horace Walpole. He has revised and enlarged the work for a new edition, which is now in press.

"Q," whose new novel, "Lady Good For Nothing," has already been announced, and to whom we are also to

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

ART.

DINANDERIE. A History and Description of Medieval Art. Work in Copper, Brass and Bronze. By J. Tavenor-Perry. With 129 illustrations. 4to. pp. xii, 253. (The Macmillan Company.)

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM. By Mrs. Henry Jenner. With forty-one illustrations. 12mo. pp. xx, 192. (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.)

ONE HUNDRED MASTERPIECES OF SCULPTURE. From the Sixth Century, B. C. to the Time of Michelangelo. With an introduction by G. F. Hill. With 102 illustrations. 8vo. pp. xiv, 211. (The John Lane Company.)

GIRLS. By Henry Holt. Illustrated. 4to. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

FREDERICK WILLIAM MAITLAND. Downing Professor of the Laws of England. A Biographical Sketch. By A. L. Fisher. Frontispiece. 8vo. pp. 179. (Cambridge University Press: G. P. Putnam's Sons, agents.)

THE COUNTY. The Story of His Own Early Life. By Homer Davenport. Embellished with sixty-two illustrations made from his original drawings. 12mo. pp. 191. (The G. W. Dillingham Company.)

THE PEOPLES KING. A Short Life of Edward VII. By W. Holt-Warner. Illustrated. 12mo. pp. 21, 287. (Imported by the John Lane Company.)

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