SOME NEW BOOKS.

A French Novelist's Impressions of America.

It was a happy thought that caused the proprietor of the *New York Herald* to suggest to M. PAUL BOURGET a visit to the United States. Not that a novelist whose writings are subjective rather than objective, and who is much more distinguished as a psychologist than as an observer, could be deemed particularly qualified by the trend of his studies and preoccupations for an analysis of our political institutions. No such analysis was needed. To say nothing of native authors, it was performed for our grandfathers by De Tocqueville, and it has been again accomplished in our own day by an Englishman in "The American Commonwealth." The task commended to M. Bourget was quite different from this. It was one for which the time was ripe, and which he, on some accounts, was peculiarly competent to undertake. It was to ascertain, through a somewhat prolonged sojourn in this country, the psychological outcome of our political and social institutions, or, in other words, to define their effects upon character and conduct. It is a remarkable contribution to this end which is embodied in the impressions, originally translated for the *Herald*, and now published in book form by the Scribners, under the title of "*Outre-Mer.*" We should, by no means, attribute so much value to the book if it dealt exclusively or mainly with the relations of the sexes and the distinctive position of woman in American society in the narrowest meaning of that word. No doubt the chapters dealing with this topic will have most attraction for the readers who are not alive to the depth of insight into the structural and dynamic factors of the social organism in the widest sense of the word, an insight distinguishable beneath the surface of the author's love stories; and who regard him simply as the professional, not to say the official interpreter of the *fin de siècle* woman's heart, that is to say, of the feminine impulses, feelings, ways, vagaries, which respond to the complex and subtle influences of that upper social stratum which is conventionally called the world. We would not, by any means, belittle the instruction derivable from a study of that stratum, and, therefore, we do not complain of the space allotted to it in this volume. An inspection, however, of society in the conventional sense was not the author's principal purpose in coming to this country, and his deductions from that inspection do not constitute the most solid and fruitful product of his visit. It is, in truth, a book of no ordinary weight and usefulness which M. Bourget has given us, a book that may be perused with profit by the statesman and the reformer on both sides of the Atlantic, and at the same time, for the reason that the writer is an artist, a book certain to give delight to those who read for amusement only.

I.

A man like M. Bourget does not enter on an extended tour in a foreign country without having a distinct end in view, and we, for whom his impressions are set down, ought to keep his aim clearly in mind. What that aim was he tells us with frankness in a preliminary chapter. He was not drawn, he says, to America by America; rather was he impelled thither by Europe and France, by preoccupation with the problems which involve the future of France and Europe. He recognizes that three powers are at work to-day hewing out that future: three divinities, with hands as stern and inexorable as those of the Parcæ. The first is democracy; the second is science; the third is the idea of race. To whatever remotest corner of the European Continent we turn, from St. Petersburg to London, from Rome to Paris, we find these three powers at work, busy in molding the lineaments of a new world, busy, at all events, in destroying, piece by piece, the antique edifice which for ages has sheltered human life. These three creative or destructive powers have their devotees and their opponents. The latter, in the judgment of M. Bourget, who is one of them, have no difficulty in showing what sort of a Europe the new divinities have made, how sinister and different it is from that dreamed of at the close of the last century, when, with a shout of confiding hope, was hailed the dawn of the Revolution. Universal suffrage, that is to say, the tyranny of mere numbers, the reign of force in its blindest form, this is the régime which Democracy has established wherever it has triumphed. To this has been added the clamorous awakening of the lower appetites, a universal discontent with one's lot, and the constant menace of a revolt of the fourth estate or proletariat, a revolt incited by poverty and envy against the civilization which promised to give liberty, equality, and fraternity, and which has played the bankrupt with its promises.

That is how M. Bourget regards the part played in Europe by Democracy, which is the first of the three powers that claim the future. What, then, does he expect from science? He admits, of course, that we have derived from science a great, positive benefit in the more adroit treatment of nature, known at last with precision; but he would deem this benefit dearly bought should it prove true that philosophical nihilism is the final and inevitable outcome of the gigantic attempt to ask questions that have no solution. Brought face to face with the unknowable, and constrained to acknowledge that its method is powerless to reach the causes that lie back of phenomena and the substance that lies behind accidental circumstance, what aliment, asks M. Bourget, can science give the soul, except the bread of bitterness and the waters of death? Developing in the highest degree in the man of to-day the spirit of experiment and of criticism, it has made faith in the supernatural almost impossible for an innumerable multitude of average consciences, although it is the sum of the average consciences that makes what we call the national conscience. Hence, exclaims our author, what a loss of the ideal in contemporary Europe! What uncertainty of convictions, and, as a natural consequence, what feebleness of will, what weakening of character, what ill-regulated energy, what moral maladies, forever recurring in ever new complications in these last years of a century which, at the outset, longed so passionately to do well. Passing to the idea of race, the last of the three solvents or evolvers of the future, the idea which at Solferino seemed so logical and so generous, M. Bourget finds that out of it has grown a menace of relapse to barbarism, now that the Europe which gave herself to progress is dotted all over with fortified camps, where thousands of men wait beside their loaded cannon for the hour of such an extermination as history has never yet known. While, however, these three social forces seem to the European observer invested with a character of fatality, illimitable and irresistible, he will not completely surrender to despair until he has calculated all the chances of a happier future, or, in other words, has made certain that the effects produced by these implacable causes are always the same. The less reason has he to despair because one country has been found, the United States, where these three forces, so destructive in the Old World, have been called upon to construct out of whole cloth a new social edifice. This country was a democracy from the very beginning, and it was a scientific democracy also, because to conquer the virgin soil it was necessary to make use of the most modern machines and methods of industry. It was a country, moreover, upon which the race problem was forced from its very origin, and by which it is continually confronted, formed as it is of the flotsam of all the nations of Europe, of Asia, and of Africa, and forced to make it possible not only for Englishmen to live with Irishmen, and Germans with Frenchmen, but for black men and yellow men to live with men of white skin. Before M. Bourget left the shores of France he knew, of course, that the American experiment is supposed to have succeeded, that every year the population of the United States augments that its riches increase, and that its cities grow with the energy of tropical plants. Is the semblance a reality? Does [illegible] present offer any guarantees for the time [illegible]? That [illegible] M. Bourget came hither [illegible] find out. How, he asks, could one know of the existence of such a nation, and not be curious to study the conditions of its existence elsewhere than in books? How lose an opportunity to estimate upon the spot the worth of a society which claims to be that of the future, and which, in any event, is one of the future possibilities? Where, in fine, would not a Frenchman go at this dark end of the century, in the hope of getting back a little faith in the future of civilization, which in France seems to many of her children on the point of sinking into irreparable ruin? This is what M. Bourget means when he says in his preface that what drew him to our shores was not so much any sympathy for America as his anxiety for France.

II.

Now let us see what conclusions the author was led to form after a sojourn of some eight months with regard to the fundamental questions which absorbed him. In a final chapter, which sums up the results of the inquiry which at heart he had in view, he declares that in the United States he learned to translate the word democracy into realities quite contrary to those which it represents in Europe, and, consequently, to fear it less: to fear it less or not at all, for, if democracy is reconcilable with the most intense development of individuality and personality, all the objections launched against that form of civilization prove groundless at once. It is, he has discovered, toward an intense and complete development of the individual that American democracy has worked, and it is, therefore, the fault of Frenchmen if they do not lead their own democracy in the same direction. Another thing which M. Bourget learned in our country was to recognize the social benefactions of science. In France it is a common idea, and one which our author was predisposed to share, that within science is concealed a principle of nihilism which renders it incompatible with the higher needs of the heart of man. Even those who do not go so far as to condemn science in the name of the ideal, are inclined to believe that it is a bad educator of the people. They consider that many of the moral maladies of the present moment are caused by the intoxication which the results of science imperfectly understood produce in ill-prepared brains. For this reaction against science M. Bourget is now convinced that there is only a partial and a transitory justification. His visit to the United States, where scientific methods have most constantly and powerfully penetrated into the pettiest details of life, has for him put things back into their true places. He recognizes first of all how incorrect are the statements of the European latter-day moralists in regard to the general nihilism of science, since science exists in the United States side by side with the most fervent Christianity. All New England is a proof of it, for there neither does Christianity stand in the way of scientific development, nor has that development extinguished the Christian faith. The agreement, which America has succeeded in effecting, Frenchmen may, in their turn, effect, and this is one of the duties to which, in M. Bourget's opinion, the example of the United States invites the best of his own countrymen. His sojourn on this side of the Atlantic also led our author to believe, in spite of the prejudices which he brought with him, that science is an excellent educator of what he terms the lower classes, or, as we should say, the mass of the community. He sees that this is because among us science is used really as an educator, that is to say, is made to appeal to the will through the intellect. He is right in saying that the Americans have obtained the vitality of their industrial civilization by submitting to this rule. The aim, at all events, if not always the accomplishment, of our schools is to duplicate culture with a corresponding activity; with us all knowledge tends to practical applications, with the result that scientific teaching, thus understood, has produced neither degraded people nor rebels against society. Only on one point does our author avow that his opinions have remained substantially unmodified by his visit to the United States. He refers to his preconceived idea of the irreconcilable antagonism of races. When he strives to guess the future of America, it is still, he says, as with that of Europe, from the side of the race problem that he ends by looking at it. He is inclined to think that a conflict between the West and the East will eventually break out, owing to what he supposes will be the failure of the civilization of Anglo-Saxon origin to assimilate Germanic and Scandinavian elements. He admits, however, that this is only an hypothesis of his own, which the majority of Americans decline even to discuss, so great is our confidence in the method adopted in our commonwealth for the settlement of race differences. That method, as M. Bourget sees, is simple and in conformity with the deep respect for individualism upon which all our democracy is founded. It consists in multiplying indefinitely the centres of local activity, and thus continuously breaking up by means of localized action the forces which massed in groups would be too powerful.

III.

It would be a great mistake to give the prospective reader of this book an idea that he is to meet with indiscriminate praise of the outcome of American institutions. In one of his last pages the author recalls half regretfully that he has said a good deal in the course of his traveller's diary about the defects which shocked him in the New World, about its incoherence and haste, the crudity of the streets of its big towns, the excesses of its fashionable life and its lack of equilibrium, measure and taste; about the too artificial tension of its culture which gives to its women, as to its flowers, the artificiality of hothouse plants; about the abuse of energy, resulting in a sort of ferocity in the competition between business men; about the indefinable something which excessive consciousness mixes with education; and finally about the absence of relaxation and heartiness in American pleasures. But what, asks M. Bourget, does such criticism amount to? All the defects of American society are summed up in this, that it has dispensed with time. The sudden transplanting of the most energetic and the most unfortunate children of Europe to a new country has produced too rapid a forward and upward movement. But why, concludes the author, should one rake up the shortcomings inseparable from such rapidity? "The more I reflect," he says, "on what I have observed, the more I understand the justice of Goethe's phrase that, when we do not speak of a thing with a partiality full of love, what we say is not worth being repeated. At the moment when I am setting my foot again upon European soil, it is truly with an emotion of gratitude that I say adieu to America; of gratitude because I have received precious, incomparable teachings; of gratitude because I feel that France is loved there; of gratitude, finally, because the United States exist, and because their mere existence represents for the future of civilization an immense possibility."

How is France to apply the lesson which M. Bourget is led by his study of the United States to believe that he may teach his country? In the answer to this question he puts his finger on the deep and far-reaching difference between a Federal democracy like our own and the centralized democracy of which France is the type. It is but justice to the author to say that De Tocqueville himself could not have marked more acutely the distinction or more exactly hit the remedy. To practise, M. Bourget says, the lesson which we can take from the American democracy, "it would be necessary for us to work in a direction opposite to that in which the French democratic party has been working for a hundred years. We should have to seek what remains of old France and attach ourselves again to it with every fibre, and, first of all, we should have to restore the province with its natural and hereditary unity, in the place of the artificial and parcelled-out 'department;' we should have to restore municipal autonomy in the place of administrative centralization; local and fecund universities instead of our official and dead 'university;' then we should have to reconstitute the landed family by allowing complete liberty in the disposal of property by will; we should have to protect labor by the reconstitution of corporations; we should have to restore to the religious life its vigor and dignity by the suppression of the budget of public worship, and by giving religious associations the right to own property freely; in a word, on this point as on the other, the task before us would be the systematic undoing of the work of the French revolution. This is the advice which, for the impartial onlooker, stands out from all observations made upon the United States." No well-informed and thoughtful American can read these words or the chapter in which they occur without recognizing that the author is not only a man of letters but a statesman, and that he should be summoned to a place in the Chamber of Deputies as well as in the Academy.

IV.

If we have dwelt hitherto upon the author's comments on the effect of our institutions and our history upon the national character, and upon its contribution to the solution of political problems, it is because not a few reviewers have lost sight of these reflections, which constitute the solid core of the attractive book before us. We can hardly stop here, however. To entirely overlook what is said about American ladies would be fair neither to M. Bourget, who brought to the study of them an incomparable aptitude, nor to the multitude of feminine readers who have conned with peculiar interest the chapters devoted to this theme. Much, from mere lack of space, we must necessarily pass over, as, for example, how the author was impressed by the dress, the manners, and the diversions of women of fashion, by the difference of their relation to society according as they were married or unmarried, and by their attitude toward the other sex, that is to say, toward their lovers and their husbands. Glimpses of his views on all these points may be obtained nevertheless from his answer to the question, How do American ladies converse? for this is the last and most important inquiry which can be made with regard to the men and women who constitute society. After all, the rest is only trappings and gesticulations; the art of conversation is society itself. For its general and, so to speak, national tone, M. Bourget recognizes that one must go to the compositions of those American writers who have thoroughly known society in many localities and at more than one epoch, and, from this point of view, the earlier novels of Henry James seem to him trustworthy witnesses. As to strictly contemporary talk, however, the talk that sensitively and vividly reflects the present and the actual, his conviction is that "no one has given a better idea of it than the distinguished woman who has made the pen-name Julien Gordon famous," and he accordingly refers to her novels the European reader who, without crossing the ocean or leaving his easy chair, may be curious to verify the features which, to his mind, most distinctly mark American conversation. Among these features, the first is somewhat hard to reduce to a formula, but M. Bourget comes near defining it by calling it the point of view. What he means is thus illustrated: You converse with a French friend; if he is bright and animated, after ten sentences the subject will have changed. He lets himself be carried along by the association of ideas, so that, in the course of an hour, you will have touched on many subjects, without method, without profit, but with pleasure. He leaves on you the impression of an alert and ready mind, which is illumined as to many things. You have not felt that which, nine times out of ten, you would feel with an American man or woman: an energy which never relapses, even in the trivialities of social intercourse, a mind which has its own standpoint from which to look upon life, and which holds to it, compels you to accept it, utilizes you. This, M. Bourget thinks, is owing to the fact that, under the outward semblance of the woman of the world who is talking with you in a drawing room, amid lights and flowers, there is a resolute creature who, from the time she came out, began to mould her own personality after some chosen model. Such a one, for instance, has resolved to be a great lady after the English pattern. She has lived much in London, and has had the wit to fit herself to her surroundings. You find it impossible to draw her away from this position, or to elicit from her any "references" that are not British and of the West End of London. A second is pleased to be a Parisian, and her conversation shuts you up in a round of ideas which presuppose Paris. For her there is nothing but French books, French pictures, and French plays. A third may have taken it into her head to be an actress. She has taken lessons in elocution and enunciates well. Her conversation turns wholly on the theatre. A fourth is literary. Within a quarter of an hour you discover that in the midst of the whirlwind of society she has found time for a wide reading, and she talks to you about her reading with the singularly vigorous precision and particularity with which the American people are endowed. These, of course, are sharply discriminated types. In general, it is admitted, the point of view is less uncompromising, and M. Bourget found in the conversation of American ladies a second characteristic which saved them from stiffness and pedantry. This is vivacity. It is cordially acknowledged that, in their lightest words, there is a distinct flavor of reality; there is also animation, action. There is nothing abstract or vague; the words always make pictures: the terms always reveal experience. It seemed to M. Bourget that American women of fashion have not the motive of personal effacement which may give to European manners their highest polish, but which, on the other hand, robs conversation of individuality. He observed that they never hesitated to speak of themselves, to tell of their journeys, of their adventures, of what they called their "experiences." Thus it came to pass that, with perhaps but little feeling for the spirit of words, they possess what M. Bourget would call the spirit of things, a picturesque speech, which, when mingled with gayety, produces an original and novel "humor."

The author of this book was also struck by a certain artlessness pervading the conversation of nice people. He noticed that broad innuendo is absolutely absent from it, and that scandal is seldom cruel. The imitation of aristocratic impertinence, that scourge of underbred society, finds no place in the United States. Ridicule, indeed, is incessant, but it is a ridicule that never wounds. It is administered chiefly through the medium of lively anecdote. Personal traits are its principal object; after that, social blunders, the lack of taste; for example, in "lion hunting," that is, the pursuit of celebrated or titled people. Anecdotes of this class generally come from Europe, and go to prove that the usual result of the passage from the New to the Old World is not to correct the faults of the American woman, but to make them more pronounced. At home in her natural surroundings she is more simple, more cordial. In short, hearing her talk, you esteem her; you feel her to be "good natured," to use her own expression, without many dislikes or many desires, and easily amused. M. Bourget sees a certain aptness in the remark of the French caricaturist Forain, who said to him after a few days in Newport, "They are children." The relatively artless, childlike spirit seemed flavorless to Forain, steeped in the atmosphere of the Paris decadence, but, to Bourget, it had a flavor, though so different from the Parisian acridity that it is difficult to taste them both.

V.

A chapter is devoted to the manifold influences by which that special creation, the American woman, is elaborated. For what seems to a Frenchman the strangely perplexing relations between American men and women, M. Bourget finds a deep-seated reason which is wholly physiological. For that matter, he thinks that when we have to do with the laws which govern the relations of the sexes, we always have to come back to physiology. If, for example, the Orientals have reduced their women to a frightful state of slavery and degradation, it is because their love for them is strongly sensual, and in all sensuality there is a basis for hatred, because there is a hidden taint of animal jealousy. If the Latin races, while according a greater liberty to women, yet instinctively revolt from the idea of their independence and personal initiative, it is because, under all their refinement, the Latins are a little like the Orientals. With them, too, sensuality and the despotism of jealousy shape the attitude of men toward the other sex. If, on the other hand, the English grant more liberty to their women, it is because in England climate, race, and religion have more tamed the ardor of masculine natures. The *sera juvenum Venus* of Tacitus (the Venus that reveals herself but late to youth), is as true of young Oxford men as it was of the young Germans in the first century of our era. M. Bourget believes that all who have closely studied the young men of America, will agree that, in this respect, they are like young Englishmen, or still more cold. At this conclusion the author has arrived from hearsay and observation, but he would reach it also on *a priori* grounds. He maintains that merely to reflect upon the conditions under which our people have grown up is to see that such would be the logical effect. The incessant toil into which the American settlers must have thrown themselves in the effort to wrest the land from nature and from the Indians, the nervous tension due to the stress of competition, bad cooking, the absence of wine and the use of intoxicating liquors, religious fervor and political ardor, and a score of other causes, would naturally check the development of our people on the side of the sexual appetite. Art and literature, too, are recent things; it follows that the emotional imagination has not been stimulated. M. Bourget found a trifling fact significant. He was assured that in all the United States there was not an entirely nude statue. This is not quite true, but there is no doubt that such statues are rare. It is true that but yesterday, the Bostonians, liberal and cultured as they are, and professedly in love with art, refused to accept for the façade of the Public Library two sculptured children because they were not clothed. It is also true that the Chicago municipality insisted upon having clothes sculptured upon a Hebe which had been left undraped. From these combined circumstances, M. Bourget draws the conclusion that, in the United States, woman's charms have but a secondary place in the interest of men. The species of cruelty which grows out of too ardent desire is asserted to be the true principle of the great inequalities of Latin legislation in which the secret ardor of the male was manifested through his distrust of the female. In American sensibility no excessive ardor of the sort exists. It even seemed to the author of this book as if the diminution in the prominence given to the life of the senses had modified, only slightly, indeed, yet perceptibly, the difference of appearance between the two sexes. He recalls, for instance, that at Cambridge, visiting the Hasty Pudding Club, he had an opportunity to examine photographs of the young men who had taken women's parts and worn their dress. There was, he thought, a surprising similarity, almost identity, indeed, between these portraits and those of their sisters or cousins, tall girls with narrow chests, falling shoulders and straight backs, who have practised gymnastics and "high kicking," who can lift their foot as high as their head and jump from their own height without injury. His inference was, although he had seen a football match, that the type of New England manhood, while taking on a finer nervous organization, had lost something of its primitive weight, and, on the other hand, that the type of womanhood, vigorous, energetic, and impulsive, had taken on a more resolute charm, firmer, less voluptuous, and delicately masculine.

The Transition Period of Western Europe.

To explain how western Europe passed from the Roman system of government to the feudal system is the purpose of a sketch published by the Longmans, *The Beginning of the Middle Ages*, by the late Dean CHURCH. This book, of course, makes no pretensions to original research, but it is based on a thorough knowledge of the work done by German, French, and English investigators. It may be heartily commended to schools and colleges as a clear and trustworthy outline of the history of the five centuries, from the end of the fifth to the end of the tenth, which witnessed the efforts of the new nations of the West after organization, improvement, and power. As examples of correctness and skill of treatment we would direct particular attention to what the author has to say regarding the continuance of the name and idea of the empire in the West throughout the period from 476 to 800, when there was no western emperor; concerning the causes of the singular power of resistance evinced by the Eastern or Byzantine empire; and, finally, touching the extent to which the Visigoths in Spain, the Franks in Gaul, and the Lombards in Italy were Latinized, and the processes by which the result was reached.

There is one preliminary topic which deserves more consideration than it receives from the author of this volume. It was a matter of the utmost moment to civilization that the barbarian attacks of the Roman empire in the third century of our era were unsuccessful. During a part of that century they seemed more likely to prove successful than they did at the beginning of the fifth century. As early as A. D. 250 the Goths, who were fleeing before the Huns, had become dangerous on the Danube; a Roman Emperor, Decius, was defeated and slain by them. For twenty years longer they ravaged the eastern provinces, until, in 270, they were temporarily checked by Aurelian and settled in Dacia. In 256 the Franks not only burst into Gaul and ravaged it, but they penetrated into Spain. The Alamanni, in 270, had made their way into Italy, and were only beaten back with difficulty by Aurelian. It was not to be expected that such great soldiers as Aurelian would always be forthcoming at the head of the State, and nothing could have saved civilization from shipwreck at that period but the drastic reorganization of the Roman commonwealth by Diocletian, improved and strengthened by Constantine through the creation of a second capital on the Bosporus. The success of the Teutonic nations at that time would have been well-nigh as disastrous as would have been that of the Huns under Attila in the middle of the fifth century. For at that time the Teutonic nations were not Christianized, nor had they acquired the rudiments of civilization which they gained during the next century and a half through incessant contact with the Romans. That is why, if greatness should be measured by the magnitude and the duration of the service rendered to mankind, Diocletian and Constantine belong in the small list of men who have earned the title of "the Great."

I.

A point never to lose sight of in the attempt to comprehend the reconstruction of western Europe in the fifth century is the fact that the disappearance of the Emperors of the West (A. D. 476) did not mean the complete and immediate disappearance of the laws, ideas, and political organization of the Roman empire in the region west of the Adriatic. These went on for a time almost unchanged outwardly, and it was only by degrees that the old order gave place to the new one which was now beginning. There never was a time from 476 to 800 when the Roman empire was supposed not to exist in the West as well as in the East. There was, to be sure, no longer a separate Emperor in the West. There was still a Roman Emperor, however, he who ruled at Constantinople, the mightiest and most majestic personage in the world, who, though far off and busily occupied with affairs of his own, had not relinquished his claims to recognition and allegiance in the West, and continued to assert them, sometimes with strength and success. Long after the separation in fact had come, the idea of the unity, the *unanimitas* of the empire lasted. The Eastern Emperor Zeno had received from Odoacer in 476 the insignia of the dethroned Augustulus, in token that the world only needed one Emperor, and he was acknowledged, in form and courtesy, by Goths and Franks at least, if not by the Vandals, as the head of the Roman world. Further, he was so acknowledged by the Popes, who were becoming more and more the centres of genuine Roman influence amid the visible triumphs of the new races. Long was it, too, before the hope and purpose of exacting real obedience were abandoned at Constantinople. In one signal instance the purpose was victoriously carried out. We refer, of course, to the recovery of Italy, of Africa, and of part of Spain under Justinian. The reconquest, however, was but transient. After Belisarius and Narses, came the Lombards (568), and then, in the seventh century, the Saracens. It was not the destiny of Byzantium to rule the world or to govern alien and distant provinces. It retired within its eastern borders. Yet it long kept a hold on maritime districts in Italy, as, for instance, on Ravenna, the Pentapolis, Calabria, and Naples! For a still longer time it held Sicily. It gave titles to barbarian kings like Clovis, and legalized their conquest. Up to the great change, indeed, in the opening of the ninth century, when Charlemagne was crowned Emperor by the Pope, it kept not merely its Exarch at Ravenna but its Count at Rome, and claimed, and sometimes compelled, the allegiance of the Roman Bishop.

II.

Another point about which there used to be much misconception, but which ought to be kept steadily in view, is the amazing solidity of the Eastern or Byzantine empire. It was a work of incomparable firmness and durability that Constantine accomplished. He had transplanted to the Bosporus not only the Roman name and one of the centres of Roman power, but much of what was Roman in ideas and habits. There, without losing its deeply impressed imperial character and the inherited power of organization, the new Rome also became Greek and it become Christian. The result was that remarkable empire which, though since its fall it has become a byword, was, when it was standing, the wonder and the envy of the barbarian world, the mysterious "Micklegarth," "the Great City, the Town of Towns," of the Northern legends. It inherited and it retained the great Roman traditions of centralization, of scientific jurisprudence, of elaborate and systematic administration. It worked upon an unbroken experience of government, on unbroken habits of organization, as familiar and easy to it as such things were difficult in the West. It improved and perfected the great legacy of republican and imperial law. It often exhibited what seemed to the careless onlooker hopeless feebleness and decay; but, beneath these appearances were the permanent elements of vast and enduring strength. Amid all the convulsions and changes of the West it stood forth unchanged for more than ten centuries, almost the same in language, in spirit, and even in its ways and forms under the last Constantine as under the first. For ten centuries, in spite of terrible disasters, bloody revolutions, loss of provinces, domestic misrule, half maimed, despoiled, unprosperous, it yet maintained itself, the unaided outpost of Christendom, against the fiercest assaults not only of swarming barbarian hordes, but of the victorious enthusiasts of Islam. It had, no doubt, in full measure, the vices of an overcultivation which is not braced by a corresponding moral force and elevation. Much in it was degenerate, hypocritical, effete, corrupt, degraded; it had many of the faults of European civilization in the time of Voltaire, and, we may add, at our end of the nineteenth century. But it is an abuse of terms to talk of the weakness of an empire which, for a thousand years, preserved civilized society, law, institutions, commerce, arts, amid the most tremendous shocks and dangers; which could bear to be so badly, cruelly, and feebly governed as certainly it often was, without falling to pieces before its enemies. In truth, during all the dark days of trouble in the West, contemporary with its rude beginnings of social order, there existed on the Bosporus one of the most magnificent cities that the world has seen. In it, as at Rome and at Venice, was centralized a power strong in its resources of government, in its age-long experience, in the skill to use its vast materials and its varied populations, in the great wealth created by an extended and active commerce, in the knowledge how to apply it, in the possession of all the mechanical and scientific instrumentalities which then had been devised by man. In it ruled a succession of sovereigns most various, indeed, in character and fortunes, many bad and incapable, but among them a large proportion of men of the stamp and force of those who rescue States. In it the literary traditions inherited from Antioch, Athens, and Alexandria still survived, and, though literary taste and power might decline, they never vanished as they did in the West, and they sometimes rose to a respectable standard. In Constantinople, too, the visitor from the rude West might find a court, with its pomp and luxury, its refinement, its politeness, its etiquette, which, long after the days of Charlemagne, Alfred, and Otto, was to the courts of the Franks, the English, and the Germans what the court of Versailles was to the court of Peter the Great.

The Emperor in the East, regarded as invested with an almost divine commission, inherited the despotic powers of the line of Augustus and Constantine; and thus it naturally came to pass that, according as he used his vast power with ability or weakness, the fortunes of the empire would rise or fall. Yet, whether its fortunes rose or fell, the empire itself was held together by great networks and scaffoldings of long date and of immense strength and tenacity, which subsisted independently of what the Emperor did or suffered, and which, to a certain degree, limited his nominally absolute authority. There was a great system of local government, and another of centralized civil administration; and there was a powerful and popular Church, identified with the interests and sympathies of the people and much mixed up with them even in its monastic elements. So, whatever might become of the Emperor, there was in the empire itself a stability and solidity of which there was as yet no trace in the West. The State might have all the vices, the shortcomings, the incapacities of a despotic Government of the modern type; but it had also the experience, the trained habits of order and industry, the enlightenment and the resources which distinguish civilized governments, whether free or absolute, from the unpractised apprenticeship of those whose political history is yet beginning, and which, under ordinary circumstances, impart firmness and strength unattainable without them. It is also to be noted that, besides its natural coherence and toughness, the mischiefs internal and external which endangered the Eastern empire were repeatedly arrested by rulers of high and strong character. Time after time, when its fall seemed at hand, when faction or mutiny or vile court intrigues had shaken it, when the wickedness and folly of some tyrant or the madness and cruelty of some ambitious woman had coincided with the strength at the moment of some foreign barbarian to threaten its existence, it was redeemed and saved by some great or able Emperor. What we term sheer luck must doubtless, in the course of its ten centuries, have counted for much in the wonderful escapes and the many deliverances of the New Rome. Much, at the same time, was owing to the preponderance, in spite of all drawbacks, of superior civilization, experience, and intelligence. Even the Byzantine vices, as well as the virtues, unlike those of the contemporary West, were characteristic of a society which had inherited a long training and cultivation. It is pointed out by the author of this book that no writer of the tenth century in western Europe, certainly no emperor or king, could possibly have written on politics, history, geography, statistics, military tactics, and agriculture as did write the Byzantine Emperor, "born in the purple," Constantine Porphyrogenitus. It is suggested that the difference between the East and West in all that comes by long familiarity with the resources of cultivated intellect, and by inherited skill, cannot be better measured than by comparing the writings of this Emperor with the vigorous but rude compositions of the court of Charles the Great, or the efforts of Alfred to begin an English literature.

III.

We have said that it was a matter of vital import to the world that the barbarian conquest of western Europe was not effected in the third instead of the fifth century. When the Teutonic peoples settled in Gaul, Spain, and Italy, all except the Franks were already Christianized, and the Franks were speedily converted, while all, without exception, had gained by age-long contact with the Romans the rudiments of civilization. The things about them, therefore, in their new settlements were not absolutely strange. Still, when times of comparative repose succeeded the excitement of conquering and taking possession, the conquerors found themselves in the presence of three sets of circumstances which were from day to day impressing their minds, forcing on them new ideas, affecting their actions, favoring or interfering with their purposes; and these, whether resisted or welcomed, were insensibly subjecting them to processes of change, gradual, prolonged, and sometimes intermittent, but very deep and irresistible. These changes were the beginnings, out of which, by long waiting and painful steps and dreary reactions of anarchy and darkness, the new and progressive civilization of the European nations was to spring. The first of these influences was the presence of the thoroughly organized Christian Church; the second was the presence of Roman law and its administrative system; the third was the atmosphere of Latin language and conversation in which the newcomers lived and its tendency to supersede their own Teutonic speech.

At the period of the Teutonic settlement in the West the Christian religion was rooted in the Latin world, and the Christian Church had insensibly attracted to itself the authority which the Roman State was losing. The moral and social power which was slowly but surely slipping out of the hands of the empire, and even some measure of the political power which its officials were abdicating, were passing over to the chiefs of the religious society which the empire had vainly combated. Amid the ruins of the greatest pride and the greatest strength that the world had known, the Church alone stood erect and strong. In days when men relied only on force and violence, yet only to discover time after time that force alone could not give them secure power, the Church alone ruled by the word of persuasion, by example, by knowledge, by its higher view of life, by its obstinate hopes and visible beneficence, by its confidence in innocence and its call to peace. In the Latin cities of Italy and Gaul, while public spirit and the sense of duty were sinking, and the civil chiefs of society shrank from the dangerous burdens and troubles of office, the Christian Bishops chosen by their people for qualities which men most respect, were, by virtue of these qualities, ready to accept the responsibilities which others gave up, and were taking informally the first places. It added to their influence that they were permanent in their offices, and some of the most remarkable of the Bishops held them for a very long period, through rapid changes in the world without. Thus Remigius, who baptized Clovis and his Franks, beheld in his episcopate of more than seventy years the last days of the Western empire and the victorious beginnings of the Merovingian line. In times of strife, the Bishops were mediators, ambassadors, peacemakers. In times of imminent danger, men looked to them to face the peril and cross the path of the destroyer. With terrible and inflexible barbarians who were deaf to Roman envoys and contemptuous of Roman soldiers, with such men as Ricimer and Alaric and even Attila and Genseric, the last word, the only word listened to, would be that of some fearless Bishop asking nothing for himself, but in the name of the Most High, that his people should be spared. Besides these majestic and commanding forms which were continually confronting the newcomers, there were also to be reckoned with the influence and the results of the religion which they professed. It was a religion which not only opened thoughts undreamt of concerning the love, the greatness, and the terrors of an unknown God, but which taught men to be daring, heroic, and enduring in the new way of severity to themselves and of boundless kindness and service to others. The barbarians coveted Roman wealth and despised Roman strength; but these bold and manly races could not but be awed by what the Christian Church had saved and incorporated of ancient Roman force and greatness of mind, heightened and ennobled by the new spirit of kindliness and purity exhibited in her charity, her discipline, and her self-devotion. All these moral forces were embodied in a compact and steadfast organization which, while all else was reeling and changing, presented the strange spectacle of stability and growth. No doubt barbarians, like Clovis, could understand but dimly the confused spectacle before them and the mixed influences which acted on their hearts. But plain to them it must have been, even in that wild time, that whatever there was on earth stronger than force and greater than kings was in that kingdom of righteousness which the Christian Church proclaimed and attempted to reflect. They perceived clearly that in the Christian Church and religion they had encountered a power of a different order from any that they had met with; a power which they must take account of, which was not afraid of them and would always be in their path; which they must either accept and make terms with, or else, at all hazards, root out. For the most part they chose the former alternative. On the other hand, it must be owned that, while Christianity raised the invaders, it suffered itself in the effort. From the moment that the barbarians became masters in the West, an immediate deterioration became manifest in the clergy, in their teaching, and in their standard of conduct. During the worst of the days, however, which followed the Teutonic conquest, there were always to be found men deeply impressed with the sense of right, full of zeal for righteousness and of disinterested love for their brethren; men who taught these lessons and men who received them in sincerity. Socially, the Church, as such, was always on the side of peace, on the side of industry, on the side of purity, on the side of liberty for the slaves and protection for the oppressed. The monasteries were the only keepers of literary tradition, the only educators; they were, still more conspicuously, great agricultural colonies, clearing the wastes and setting the example of improvements. They were the only seats of human labor which could hope to be spared amid perpetual wars. In the religious teachings of the clergy, the great outlines and facts of the Christian creed continued to be strongly and firmly drawn; these, at least, were never obliterated, though often confused by lower and meaner admixtures. It was impossible to forget the cross of Christ, and the Lord's Prayer went up in numberless tongues and dialects all over the West, from the ignorant and the miserable, from the barbarian warrior, as well as from his victims.

IV

A second potent source of influence was the fact that the Teutonic settlers found themselves in the midst of a population long accustomed to the elaborate and fully developed system of Roman law which had grown up out of the varied experience and the practised forethought of a great people, and which provided naturally and easily for the numberless questions of human life and intercourse. It is clear that Roman law greatly impressed them. Each tribe, indeed, had brought its own unwritten customs, which earlier or later, after the settlement, were written down in Latin, and became, in contrast to the general Roman law expressly recognized for the Roman population, the peculiar law of each invading people. Eventually, as in the law of the Visigoths in Spain, the two elements, Teutonic and Roman, were fused together into one general code of territorial instead of personal law, for a nation in which Goths and Romans had come to be looked upon as one people. Even while the special customs of each tribe were defined and maintained, there was yet always the consciousness of a larger and universal law around them, the colossal system of laws, decrees, and judicial decisions which had come down from the republic and the empire, and which, compared with the sectional and customary laws of Franks or Goths, seemed like the general law of the universe as contrasted with the by-laws of some local association. This vast scientific apparatus of jurisprudence was in the hands of the Latins, understood by them alone, still worked and administered by them, accomplishing ends which the rough barbarian rules could not attain. The Teutonic settlers, without wholly understanding the great instrument, were at least able to appreciate its power and advantages. In the North, moreover, under the Franks, the Roman municipal system, with its magistrates and its forms, continued to act, only adjusted to a state of things in which the Teutonic Count or Bishop took the place of imperial presidents or consulars; and the close Latin municipality gradually passed into a more popular body, which was to become the "commune," or "commonalty" of later times. In general, it may be said that, in proportion as the Germans settled down to the conditions of civil life, bought and sold, built and planted, claimed rights or disputed them, made wills and inherited property, they came upon the Roman civil order, waiting for them ready made in all questions, with its strong principles and established rules. As Guizot expresses it, they found themselves "caught in its meshes." Its influence varied greatly, but its traces are seen everywhere, and it was one of the chief means by which in the fusion of the two races in the West and South the Latin element gained more and more the ascendancy.

V.

We pass to the third promoter of assimilation and amalgamation. It is obvious that all the Teutonic settlers, Goths, Franks, Burgundians, Lombards, would find themselves in daily contact in the business of life with a Latin-speaking population, the leaders of which were more cultivated and the inferior classes more numerous than themselves. Whether as masters or as fellow citizens, whether profiting by Latin knowledge or employing the labor of their new dependents and slaves, they were forced to know something of Latin; not, of course, the literary Latin which we have in books, even in the books of the time, but the Latin spoken in daily life, as it must have existed even in the days of Cicero and Virgil, the Latin spoken by the humble, coarse, and ignorant; the Latin of soldiers, husbandmen, mechanics, foreign slaves, with its vulgar idioms and pronunciation, varying in different localities, and with its shifting admixtures of rude and outlandish expressions. The new Teutonic masters could not deal with their woodsmen, their carpenters, their masons on their possessions without acquaintance with the provincial dialect in which the Latin of common life happened to be spoken on the spot. Whenever, on the other hand, they had need of learning, political, legal, or ecclesiastical, in the services of the Church, the law courts, or the lawyer's office, they found that learning had not attempted, and was hardly able to speak in any other language than the imperial tongue of Rome. There was not yet strength enough in the German dialects, still reputed barbarous even by those who used them, to break the prescription of custom in favor of Latin in business, in diplomacy, in all solemn and formal transactions. Their ancient speech, indeed, remained among the Franks and Goths the cherished sign of a conquering and dominant race. It was the language of the nursery and of the family, as long as the family kept itself Teutonic; it would have the preference in easy and intimate intercourse as long as the boast of ancestry and blood remained in the court or in the service of the court. But, besides that Franks and Goths by degrees married Latin wives, Gallic, Italian, Spanish, it became more and more the case that, if the imported Teutonic was the language of predilection, the local Latin was the language of necessity or convenience. So it came to pass that for centuries in the land of the Teutonic conquest two languages went on side by side in proportions varying in different districts and different strata of society. Each acted on the other, but each remained distinct, borrowing words or even forms, but keeping its own fundamental structure and elements. Where Goths, Franks, Lombards settled, the population must have been, in parts of it at least, bi-lingual. Two languages were in use running a race for the mastery, as now in Wales and Brittany, in many cantons of Switzerland, in parts of the United States and Canada, in Hungary and Bohemia, and in India, till at last convenience, policy, accident, gave one or other the victory. Unperceived at the time and silent, the struggle went on between the Teutonic and Latin languages. The Teutonic had on its side the pride not merely of rank, but of race and blood. On the other hand, the Latin had three advantages: It had numbers; it had, what the Teutonic had not yet, a written literature; and it had the Church, with its services, its schools, its legal forms, and its clerks. In a large portion of the Teutonic conquests, these three advantages were decisive, though the struggle was long. The end has been that victory has remained with the Latin, and its derivative languages, in the west and south of the Continent of Europe.

Thus, under influences such as these, helping or checking each other, a new society began to rise out of the ruins and fragments of the old. Germans and Romans each ceased to be what they had been and began to become something new and different. The slow, and often imperceptible, process of change was under way which was to build up again in the course of many ages the order and stability of life which, in the fall of the Roman empire seemed to have foundered; the process which, often broken off, often ill-directed, often disappointing in its results, was yet, at last, to fit the new nations to take the place of the empire which their fathers had destroyed. A remarkable feature of the change was the final prevalence of the Latin element over the Teutonic in almost all parts of southern and western Europe wherein it had been established. The prevalence was steady and certain, however protracted. There was a reconquest to Roman habits and sympathies, to what a mediæval word designated as *Romanitas* or *Latinitas*, of the Latin provinces which the German conquerors had seized and made their own. Rome, which had begun by Latinizing her conquered provinces, eventually Latinized also her German conquerors. M. W. H.

TOLD BY AN OLD SHOWMAN.

Three Brief but Interesting Stories About the Ways of the Monkey.

"Speaking of monkeys," said the old showman, "we had about thirty of them once in a big cage with a shelf along each side, up high, for them to lie on, and a little dead tree with the ends of the branches sawed off standing in the middle for them to climb up to the shelves by, and to hang on to by their tails if they wanted to. One day we set in on the bottom of the cage a champagne bottle filled with very highly fermented root beer, and with the cork held in with a cord tied with a bowknot. The monkeys got up on the shelves and up in the stumpy tree and looked down on this bottle very suspiciously; finally their curiosity got the better of them, and they came down and moved around the bottle to inspect it. At last they got near enough to touch it and handle it, and finally they upset it over on its side. Then one of the monkeys began pulling on the string, with the rest all clustered around. At last he pulled the knot loose, and bang! went the cork, and away went the beer. The first rush of it knocked over three or four of the monkeys nearest the muzzle of the bottle, and it drenched half a dozen of them and wet all of them more or less, for it went through the bunch of monkeys like a puff of smoke, spattering and flying in all directions. An instant later the monkeys were up the tree and lying along on the shelves; there was nothing left on the floor of the cage but the empty bottle.

"A number of times after that we set bottles of beer out in the sun to ferment, and then set them in the cage, but the monkeys never would touch them. We could set the bottles in, but we couldn't make the monkeys pull the string.

"There was a lady standing in front of the cage one day who had on a hat with a big bunch of red cherries and a lot of flowers on the top of it. A monkey reached through the bars and grabbed the cherries. The lady pulled back, but the monkey held on and pulled the hat off and tried to drag it through the bars into the cage. Three or four other visitors standing near rushed up and grabbed the hat, and they pulled one way while the monkey pulled the other. They finally got the hat away from the monkey and returned it to the lady. The cherries were about all gone, and what there was left of the rest of the hat really wasn't of much account. The lady said she would have to be paid for the hat, and she made for the box office.

"'Why, certainly,' said the man in the box office. 'How much do you value the hat?'

"'Five dollars,' the lady said, and the box office man handed out the money.

"The lady smiled; she was evidently pleased. 'I didn't really expect you would pay for it,' she said, and she turned to go away.

"'Madam,' said the man in the box office, and the lady turned around.

"'We'll take the hat now, if you please.'

"'What!' said the lady.

"'The hat, if you please,' said the box office man. 'We've paid for it, and we would like to have it.'

"Of course, the lady couldn't go away without a hat, and the upshot of it was that she returned the $5 and went away with the hat.

"Standing in front of the cage one day was a man who had on a pair of gold spectacles. A monkey reached through and took the spectacles off the man's nose. The man was greatly surprised at this, but he was a great deal more surprised when he saw the monkey, still standing close by him, push the glasses out of the frame and put them in his mouth and stow them away, one in each cheek, and then proceed to twist the frames up, like so much wire, into a small bunch. One of our men went into the cage and choked the monkey until he got the glasses out of his mouth, and then he got the frame away from him and we returned them to the owner. Of course, they were not of much use to him in that shape, but it was the best we could do."

"The Gold Diggings of Cape Horn."

A study of life in Tierra del Fuego and Patagonia has been put on paper by Mr. John R. Spears of THE SUN, and will be published this month by G. P. Putnam's Sons, 27-29 West 23d st.—Adv.