NEW BOOKS.

A Life of Abelard.

It is probable that most Americans and Englishmen have obtained their impressions of the most eminent schoolman of the twelfth century from the account of him given by Mr. Cotter Morison in his "Life and Times of St. Bernard," or else from the sketch of the same eminent theologian in Mr. R. L. Poole's "Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought." It was because he regarded those estimates as unfair or inadequate that Mr. Joseph McCabe undertook an independent study of the original authorities, the outcome of which is a volume entitled "Peter Abélard" (Putnams). The chief sources of the narrative are, of course, the letters of Abélard and Héloïse, the first of which, the so-called "Story of My Calamities," is an autobiographical sketch covering the first fifty years of Abélard's life. To these documents must be added, first the letters of St. Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, his arch enemy, who, although far more influential as an organizer of the forces of the Church, shrank from a verbal encounter with Abélard, and pleaded that he "was but a child beside him;" the letters, secondly, of Peter the Venerable, the famous Abbot of Cluny; those of the rationalist, Jean Roscelin, Canon of Compiègne, Abélard's early teacher; and those of another contemporary, Fulques, prior of the monastery of Deuil. A number of Latin works, written shortly after Abélard's death, complete or complicate the materials for a biography. There are also brief references to Abélard in many of the chronicles of the twelfth century.

A biographer of the great heretical schoolman of the twelfth century has to deal at the outset with the question, whether the letters which have come down to us, as those of Abélard and Héloïse, are genuine. Mr. McCabe points out that the recent German biographers of Abélard do not so much as mention the doubts that have been mooted concerning the authenticity of the letters. It is unquestionably true that the letters cannot be traced further back than the middle of the thirteenth century. In our author's opinion the fact proves nothing, for the following reasons: In the first place, Abélard had been condemned for heresy, and his party had been scattered. In the second place, there are no writers to whom one could look for allusions to the letters before Guillaume de Lorris and Jehan de Meung manifestly introduced them in the "Roman de la Rose". Under the circumstances, Mr. McCabe thinks that the fact that the oldest extant manuscript of the letters dates from one hundred years after the death of Héloïse (she died in 1163, twenty-one years after Abélard) indicates that she wished the correspondence to be preserved in a reverent privacy. Lalanne, who is a sceptic touching the authenticity of the letters, avers that he cannot reconcile their tone with the condition of the writers, or with the age in which they lived. He also says that Abélard would be hardly likely to preserve such letters, had he received them from his wife. Orelli has tried, it seems, to sow similar doubts in Germany. Mr. McCabe's reply to the sceptics is: "If it seems incredible that Héloïse should have penned the letters which bear her name, how shall we qualify the supposition that there lived, some time within the following century, a genius capable of creating them, yet utterly unknown to his contemporaries. * * * We are asked to reject a wonder in the name of a greater wonder." Our author himself acknowledges, however, that, setting apart the letters of Abélard, the authenticity of which he deems it idle to question, there are features in the letters of Héloïse which are startling to the modern mind. He refers, of course, to the erotic passages on which her romantic admirers have concentrated their attention; they are not overlooked in the book before us. As to these features, our author insists that, if one can escape the pressure of modern associations, and consider the correspondence in its twelfth century setting, no inherent improbability will be found in it; rather the reverse. As to the publication of letters, in which husband and wife have made to one another the most sacred confidences, "we need not," says Mr. McCabe, "suppose, as M. Gérard does, that Héloïse ever intended such a result, or built up her notes into letters for that purpose." Nothing compels us to think that the letters were brought together and published until many years after the writers had been laid in a common tomb.

Had Abélard a right to marry Héloïse? The author of this biography does not hesitate to answer the question in the affirmative. He maintains, in the first place, that Abélard was not a priest at the time. Several reasons are adduced for holding that, though he was probably a canon of the cathedral of Notre Dame, he did not receive the priesthood until a much later date. In his own "Story of My Calamities," he makes Héloïse address him, about the time of their marriage, as "a cleric and canon," but not as a priest. Had he been a priest the circumstance would have afforded Héloïse one of the most powerful objections to a marriage; as a matter of fact, in the long catalogue of such objections which she put forward she does not mention the priesthood. In the second place, even if Abélard were a priest at the time, it is by no means clear that he would have considered the fact an insuperable impediment to marriage. According to our author, who seems to have examined them, the acts of the Council of London (1102), the Council of Troyes (1107), the Council of Rheims (1119) and other councils, show that the decree of the Church against the marriage of priests was far from being universally accepted. There is even a specific reason for thinking that Abélard himself did not recognize an impediment of that character. "In a work which bears the title 'Sententiæ Abælardi,' we find the thesis more or less clearly propounded, that the priest may marry. The work is certainly not Abélard's own composition, but experts regard it as a careful summary of his views by some master of the period." If Abélard hesitated to marry, and if Héloïse herself was violently opposed to such a step, it was because both were aware that marriage was fast becoming a fatal obstacle to advancement in the ecclesiastical world.

The mutilation, of which Abélard was the victim, is attributed in this biography to the belief on the part of Héloïse's uncle, Canon Fulbert, not that his niece was living in an unconsecrated liaison with Abélard, but that, by sending her to a nunnery, the latter had taken a preliminary step to a dissolution of the marriage. Canon Fulbert decided on a revenge which should at least prevent Abélard from marrying another.

M. W. H.

Rudyard Kipling Himself Again.

There are people that do not like Mr. Rudyard Kipling's stories and many more that do who will turn with interest to his latest tale, "Kim," published by McClure, Phillips & Co. Some things that Mr. Kipling has done of late may have aroused the suspicion that his powers were declining. There have been rather strange letters and articles from South Africa; there has been an extraordinary piece of verse lately. Some, remembering how early his talent ripened, have looked forward to an equally rapid decay, as in the case of the Hindus among whom he lived so long. Others with more reason have been alarmed at signs that he was taking himself seriously, a disease that has wrought havoc with many a literary artist, for instance, Mr. Howells and Mr. Cable. Even those who admire him most as a writer of short stories may have had doubts, in view of previous attempts, as to his ability to tell a long story successfully.

With "Kim" Mr. Kipling puts at rest any fears about the waning of his powers. It is by far the best piece of writing that he has done; direct and clear as all his writing is, and freer from the tricks and mannerisms that his imitators have sought to copy than anything he has published so far. With very simple materials he has constructed a story that holds the reader's attention close, and that only misses being a great story through a mistake in the author's view of proportions. The hero is a charming creation, a worthy companion to Mowgli, and the reader follows him and the old lama he serves in their quest for the river of life with delight and pleasure. Fault has been found with the accuracy of Mr. Kipling's India as with that of Mr. Cable's Louisiana, but both are delightful to people who only read of them, and far more delightful and real beyond any doubt than the reality. Precise persons have taken on themselves to write tales about Indian life that should correct Mr. Kipling's misinformation and experts have praised highly their accuracy; but their tales remain unread deservedly and it is Mr. Kipling that shapes the India of our imaginations, the jungle folk, the nights in the cities, the workings of white ruler and ruled of all colors. That life he shows in many phases in "Kim."

Starting with a big and poetical idea into which the reader must enter with sympathy, the old priest's mystic search and the boy's attraction, first to the man and then to his object, Mr. Kipling is drawn aside, unfortunately, to a subject that to most people will seem of far less consequence. The Indian Secret Service is doubtless a very important department, and Mr. Kipling long ago showed what an exhaustless mine of romance it contained. It is but a petty thing, however, in comparison with the Hindu conception of salvation of the soul; and the long account of Kim's training for the service, notwithstanding the amusing incidents and exciting adventures it includes, checks the progress of the real story. Nor does anything in the development of the plot or of the characters warrant the delay. The reader becomes impatient at being held back for long pages while he makes the acquaintance of various persons, some interesting, others not, but none having much to do with the main story. When the quest begins anew the close interest evoked by the earlier pages awakes again at once.

It is possible, of course, that Mr. Kipling had some ulterior object in what he has done. Kim, when he leaves us, is a mere boy, and may have before him as voluminous a career as Sherlock Holmes or d'Artagnan. We hope Mr. Kipling, having brought him to life, will keep him alive, for Kim is a great fellow, full of all kinds of possibilities. The story, as it stands, demonstrates that Mr. Kipling can sustain his style, can sustain his plot throughout a long volume, a matter that was not made clear by either "The Naulhaka" or "Captains Courageous." It shows, too, to the delight of his admirers, that the old Kipling is very much alive and unweakened by his South African political fever. There will be great novels by Rudyard Kipling yet.

"John Oliver Hobbes, With Your Spasms and Sobs."

Beauleigh, Duke of, marries Susan Arabella Idonia Ragot.

Beylestein, a German Socialist, drinks rum, eats with his knife.

Ceppel (Caroline Ragot), Mrs. Odo, sister of Susan and Rosabel.

Ceppel, Odo, highly respectable, indecently rich, middle-class prig.

Luttrel, Hildegarde, very Protestant, sister of Jocelyn.

Luttrel, Jocelyn, rich Ruskinian Socialist, in love with Rosabel.

Ragot, Sir Courtenay, slangy brother of Rosabel, Caroline, Susan; protector of Amelia Clotilda Parry.

Shortclough, Lord, a crétin with a wabbly underlip.

Shortclough, Lady (Rosabel Ragot); also Lady Wroxall; elopes twice, to J. Luttrel; beauty and heroine; marries crétin to oblige; likewise Wroxall; means well, but is a little impulsive; leaves Luttrel the first time so as not to break off Susie's coming marriage to Beauleigh.

Torring-Seafeld, Mrs. Amélie, beautiful "paintress," "sculptress," pianist, Socialist, widow of a violinist.

Wardle, Archibald, middle-aged swell with corsets.

Wroxall, Lord, not beautiful, but good; nominal and temporary husband of Rosabel.

These are the main characters in John Oliver Hobbes's "The Serious Wooing" (Frederick A. Stokes Company) which bears the sub-title "A Heart's History." On the whole, these characters are as sweet a gang as one would care not to associate with. Apparently the author of "The School for Saints" has here written the school for sinners. Rosabel is not the victim of reforming illusions when she takes her gifted Socialist. "Marriage," she admits, "with all its drawbacks, is the easiest arrangement. The other fails when there is an emergency or illness. You feel you have no position—no standing room." She might have added that without marriage we should have very few French novels or English imitations of them. The book is mostly talk, clever talk, some of it, full at times of neat characterization. "Some people seem to have such temptations, Odo," says Mrs. Odo, justifying Rosabel. "Do not use expressions which you cannot understand," replies Odo the truly good. "Do I have temptations? Certainly not. People who conduct themselves properly do not know what the word means." According to Sir Courtenay, "Dear old England is rolling downhill, I am afraid; but for God's sake don't let it get about that I said so! It might do a lot of harm." About Harry Beauleigh, whose family's morals "had an Evangelical rigidity," this stanza, Mrs. Craigie calls it a verse, had been current at Oxford:

"There was Harry Augustus, Duke Beauleigh,
Who was good you know, really and truly.
When he saw pretty dears
Look at him with their leers,
He wished them to—Heaven did Beauleigh."

Old Lady Ragot, a wrinkled doll in a blond wig, has never heard of the intellectual Luttrel. "I never meet these clever people," she says candidly. "Is he good looking?" She is sorry for the cretinous Shortclough, when he passes away on account of an immense lunch followed by a boiling bath. It's true, as Sir Courtenay says, that the crétin cost fifty-five guineas a week of his own money. Still, "it is sad all the same," as Lady Ragot confesses pathetically, "to think I shall never again hear poor Tommie say, 'What date do you make it?'"

In the estimation of Mr. Archie Wardle, "when the middle classes are clever, they're so damned ugly." As he speaks he toys with "an uncut copy of Anatole France's 'M. Bergerat à Paris'"—its "yellow paper covers exquisitely concealed in a little case of beautiful old silk." There is no beautiful old silk around these yellow covers, but this is a French novel, not by Anatole France, alas! It is hopelessly "middle class" to talk about money and price, but almost any French book store keeps at least 6,500 better French novels than this at 65 cents apiece. And in no one of them is there more wearisome cant than this:

Luttrel—"Darling, don't condescend to the usual hypocrisies at such a moment. You are quite exempt from superstition. Your mind is as free as my own."

Rosabel—"Yes, free. Besides, God would understand."

Luttrel—"Then no one else matters. You must see that no one else could matter."

Rosabel—"The irregular sort of arrangement never answers."

Luttrel—"I could undertake to make it answer if you loved me and trusted me."

Rosabel—"But if one loved you and trusted you, one would want to marry you in a proper way." (Here observe that Rosabel is confoundedly middle class in some of her notions.) "The most advanced women always want to be properly married when they are really in love."

Luttrel—"I don't ask you to be advanced—I ask you to be loyal and fearless of bogies."

It strikes us that the roses and raptures are about as faded as the lilies and languors. But far be it from us to be unjust to the book. It makes us happy to think how happy with what an almost guilty joy it will make the library committees and the book clubs in Higganum and West Hurley and Sleepy Eye and Deaf Smith county; how they will read it with delight, pass it around among favored neighbors, talk about it at a hundred tea tables, sociables, and "shirt-and-pants" parties. Happy souls, whose felicity we don't envy but wonder at! They will read the book because they want to. It was our sadder fate to read it because we had to.

More Habitant Poems.

Those who remember Dr. Drummond's first volume of poems, "L'Habitant," will welcome gladly the new outpourings of the Canadian muse, "Johnnie Courteau and Other Poems," by William Henry Drummond (G. P. Putnam's Sons). Dr. Drummond is a real poet in spite of dialect, and the same vigor and swing will be found in these newer poems that marked those by which he first called attention to himself. In proof let him introduce the curé of Calumet.

Dere's no voyageur on de reever never run hees canoe d'écorce
T'roo de roar an' de rush of de rapide, w'ere it jump lak a beeg w'ite horse,
Dere's no hunter man on de prairie, never wear w'at you call racquette
Can beat leetle Father O'Hara, de Cure of Calumette.
Hees fader is full-blooded Irish, an' hees moder is pure Canayenne,
Not offen dat stock go togedder, but she's fine combination, ma frien'.
For de Irish he's full of de devil, an' de French dey got savoir faire,
Dat's mak' it de very good balance an' tak' you mos' every w'ere.

And, dialect notwithstanding, the tale of the little curé must be read to the end. There is, too, a story of righteous retribution visited through a bull on "Mon Frère Camille."

Mon frère Camille he was firse class blood
W'en he come off de State las' fall,
Wearin' hees boot a la mode bex toe
An' diamon' pin on hees shirt also
Sam' as dem feller on Chi-caw go.
But now he's no blood at all,
Camille, mon frère.

Camille talked over much of his exploits at bullfights in Mexico, but Mme. Latour's four-dollar little bull brought him to grief in the presence of the whole village.

An' w'en ma broder's come down agen
I s'pose he mus' change hees min'
An' mebbe t'ink it ht's all de sam'
He'll keel dat bull w'en he got more tam'
For deze he was runnin' wit ole Ma-dame
De chil'ren, de bull, an' de cow behin'
Camille, mon frère.

Many of Dr. Drummond's poems contain love stories, some are written in plain English, a few bring in the Celtic dialect. It takes courage in British lands to-day to exclaim with the "Dublin Fusileer."

But here's to you, Uncle Kruger! slainté! an' slainté galore,
After all, you're a dacint Christian, never mind if you are a Boer.
So with heart an' a half, ma bouchal, we'll drink to your health to-night
For yourself and your brown-faced Dutchmen gave us a damn good fight.

Perhaps as good an example as we can give of Dr. Drummond's peculiar quality of pathetic humor is the end of "Little Bateese." The grandfather speaks:

Jus' feel de muscle along hees back,
Won't geev heem moche bodder for carry pack
On de long portage, any size canoe,
Dere's not many t'ing dat boy won't do,
For he's got double-joint on hees body, too,
Leetle Bateese!
But leetle Bateese, please don't forget
We rader you're stayin' de small boy yet,
So chase de chicken an' mak' dem scare
An' do w'at you lak wit' your ole gran'père
For w'en you're beeg feller he won't be dere—
Leetle Bateese!

Canada has a poet now who can write in mixed English. He may find occasion to drop dialect some day, for his poetry does not depend wholly on dialect.

Tristram of Blent.

The Russian calendar is to be reformed. The job should have been done before. Then Mr. Anthony Hope Hawkins might not have written "Tristram of Blent" (McClure, Phillips & Co.), in which the date of the hero's mother's marriage is the nub of the trouble. Not that the novel is bad, but it is not so easy and fantastic, all fire and air, as we are entitled to expect from its author. It is far from heavy but it has not all the lightness for which this baker has made a name. In the Tristrams, especially in the hero's mother Addie, gay, impulsive, unreflecting, careless, beautiful and unmoral as a goddess or a nymph, and in Cecily Gainsborough, wilful and generous, the refined image of the older woman and the quintessence of all the gracious traits of the house, Mr. Hope—Mr. 'Awkins, is a name we can't habide—displays at least something of his wonted ease and charm.

The hero, to whom in his boyhood his mother, in a campmeeting moment, a Salvation Army fit of remorse or remembrance, makes confession, at once devotes himself vigilantly and with mature purpose to the defence of his rights or rather of his want of right. Such a course of action is natural, and may seem a relief from the rash altruism of the ordinary hero; but it is a little sordid. Tristram turns out to have a long head. He would have been a successful business man. He shows himself a keen blade at a bargain. The other Tristrams to whom we are introduced have none of this Yankee or Hebraic shrewdness. It can be explained and made consistent only on the theory that the Tristrams are full of contradictions, a theory which Mr. Hope repeats a little too often. One resents the valuable advice and directions that accompany each bottle. If the Tristrams are capable of explanation let them explain themselves. The author winking from the side of the stage seems superfluous.

Tristram has been brought up to fraud, to be suspicious of attack, to look to be supplanted. That is his business side in part; in part, it is his profound belief in his Tristramness, so to speak, so that dates and marriage and birth certificates may go hang. This secret is in the possession of amiable busybodies, one of whom, Mina Zabriska, sharp of eye and face, eagerly inquisitive and unmaliciously mischievous, spiteful and affectionate, is perhaps the best-drawn figure in the book. There is a touch of Jane in her, something pleasantly Austenesque. Her uncle, a wary soldier of 44, wants to marry an heiress whom Tristram thinks it convenient to put into his own purse. She loves and takes at the last a bashful, hearty young farmer. But complications have come. Mina's uncle, having from her the Tristram secret, tries a sort of innocent blackmail against the hero, who wrestles with him at the pool and throws him triumphantly there and elsewhere. Mother Addie dies. Cecily Gainsborough, a more glorious Addie, comes to Blent. The hero, who has never seen her and always hated her, falls in love with her at once, kicks prudence to the dogs, confesses, leaves her to be the Lady of Blent, departs. Cecily grieves. She would like to remedy what she feels to be an injustice by marrying Tristram. He is done with the other heiress but is too devilish proud to "make up" to Cecily. The old-fashioned way; poor but proud.

More busybodies—the book is full of amiable persons with little to do but to mind other people's business—plan to have Tristram made a Viscount and marry the Lady of Blent. Enter the Prime Minister, a regrettable "slouch" of a man, Lady Flora, various swells. We don't care for 'em much. Perhaps Mr. Hope doesn't. But they are good book agents. There are persons in England and in the United States who will find much happiness in associating, even on paper, with these great folks. Well, Tristram finds out that he is the Lord of Blent after all. Naturally he doesn't find it out by means of his lawyers. Had he set them to work, the book would not have been written. Now, by an innocent deception, to marry Cecilia before she knows that the king has come to his own again. One more scene of absurdity or Tristramity and everything's all right. Anthony made it and let it pass for a novel. There are many worse and many better; but 'twill serve. Personally we can't regret those three hours or so we have spent upon it, for somewhere in it there is mention of "a passionate young man with a wart on his nose."

Other Books.

It is a pleasure to get Balzac at last in suitable form. The French editions are unsatisfactory; the large paper edition is inconvenient to handle and the small edition in fifty odd volumes that we have had to put up with so many years, for want of a better, is carelessly printed on wretched paper. The pocket edition of "La Comédie Humaine" of Honoré de Balzac, translated by Miss Katherine Prescott Wormley, that Little, Brown & Co. are publishing, will gratify all Balzac lovers. The volumes are small, handy, well printed and neatly bound; the translation is a careful and competent piece of workmanship, and the whole work will be comprised in thirty volumes of moderate price. Each volume has a photogravure frontispiece for those who like their Balzac illustrated. The four volumes already issued contain "Scenes From Private Life," namely: "Pere Goriot" and "The Marriage Contract," "Memoirs of Two Young Married Women, and Albert Savarus," "Fame and Sorrow, A Double Life and The Rural Ball," and "Modeste Mignon and A Daughter of Eve."

"The Medical Directory of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut," published by the New York State Medical Association, appears in its third volume, that for the year 1901, with marked improvements. It now contains for the first time the names of all legally registered medical practitioners regardless of what school they may belong to. The lists of Brooklyn, New Jersey and Connecticut doctors are distinguished from the rest by the use of paper of different colors. Besides the doctors' names arranged in alphabetical order, and also by streets, the volume contains much useful information; the charter of the medical association, the statutes relating to physicians' duties, the medical code of ethics and so on. There are other matters useful to physicians, too, such as the names of city and State officials and street and ferry directories. The lists of pharmacists and dentists, contained in the last directory, are omitted in the new one.

We have also received:

"Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology." Vol. 1. James Mark Baldwin. (Macmillans.)

"Hirsh's Tabulated Digest of the Divorce Laws of the United States." New edition. Hugo Hirsh. (F. & Wagnalls Company.)

"The Pirate Dog and Other Tales." W. A. Frisbie and Fred R. Bartholomew. (Rand, McNally & Co.)

"Period Decoration." Chandler R. Clifford. (Clifford & Lawton.)

"A Friend With the Countersign." B. K. Benson. (Macmillans.)

"History of Education." Mary M. Conway. (C. K. Bardeen.)

"Life Questions." John Henry Francis. (The Robert Clarke Company.)

"The Education of the American Citizen." Arthur Twining Hadley. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

"A Crazy Angel." Annette Lucille Noble. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

"Owen Glyndwr and the Last Struggle for Welsh Independence." Heroes of the Nations Series. Arthur Granville Bradley. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

New Publications. | New Publications.

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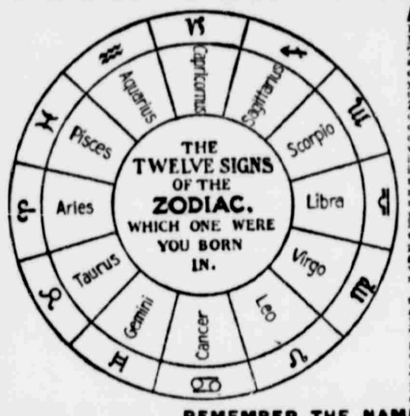

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