NEW BOOKS.

A Girl of Candor.

Alice Duer Miller has written a delightful story in "The Blue Arch" (Charles Scribner's Sons). The girl Nina will warm the reader's heart while amusing him immensely. Her trained mind (trained by the advanced education and in scientific ways), her bewildering candor, her large blue eyes, her grave willingness to test the very sincerely entertained theory of her different but equally adorable sister Isabella that only men can make women happy—by a hundred evidences Nina is a thoroughly captivating person.

Dr. Vester was undoubtedly the rudest astronomer in America. Nina had some difficulty in maintaining herself in her post as his assistant in the New Jersey laboratory. Her opposition was heroic when he undertook to discharge her on the second day of her singularly stormy service. She showed him then that she had a determined mind, and on another occasion he acknowledged her force of character in his exclamation "Manœuvred!" which was perfectly descriptive of what had happened to him. He was a great astronomer. His peculiarities of temper seem to have been reasonably explained by Mrs. Morgan, the kindly sociologist, who said that he had "a great spirit and a poor nervous system." His assistant, young Haines, again was doubtless justified in a strong feeling of admiration for him, though Haines may indeed not have been quite accurate in declaring that his chief by power of his inquiries regarding gravitation had Newton "skinned."

Nina became a professor (thanks to a rich subscription by her devoted and competent family). She had a small chair of astronomy in a college where the great chair was occupied by the handsomest of professors. He neglected the stars to bestow his attention upon Nina's more immediate and lovelier eyes. Handsome though he was, he was no conqueror. The rude astronomer of the New Jersey observatory was the greater and the more fortunate man. Science is great, the mind a kingdom is, but Sister Isabella was right.

The story is strikingly original and worthy and refreshing amid the run of novels. It is told with entire understanding and skill. It has gladdened us and we are grateful for it.

The Tragedy of a Colonel's Wife.

The lady celebrated in Mr. Hubert Wales's story of "The Wife of Colonel Hughes" (the Stuyvesant Press) was supple and lithe and given to the practice of provocative attitudes. She wore shimmering and filmy attire and curled herself up in sofa corners against a background of contrasting soft cushions. As soon as her respectable husband had gone to his duties in the House of Parliament she busied herself with the telephone and called a taxicab and visited an artist of well controlled emotions, before whom she pirouetted, exhibiting her openwork stockings.

There was another artist, the author of a picture called "The Sinners," in which two persons sitting in a decorous attitude on a bench were seen to be sinful by the powerful expression that had been communicated to their faces. Col. Hughes's wife determined to corrupt this artist, and she did. Her husband was the kindest of men; the artist had a wife and three children; and there is a great deal of solemn and not very interesting philosophy applying to the situation.

The enamored pair went away to Switzerland together. She determined upon a tragedy to right matters. At the end of a month, dissembling her intention, she sent him back to London. Having done that, she climbed the snowy Alps without a guide, tumbled into the welcoming and exonerating snow and died generously of exposure. The inference is that the Colonel married again, choosing a lady who was obviously devoted to him, and that the artist returned to his family, feeling a renewed power in his art by reason of this mournful experience.

We do not know why anybody should care for so mechanical and dreary a tale, but undoubtedly there are readers who are qualified to cherish it as a splendid and sensitive revelation.

But the Villains Were Drowned.

It was well for Red Scarlett in Mr. S. Carleton Jones's story of "Out of Drowning Valley" (Henry Holt and Company), to tie up the tallow faced Frenchman after shooting a nick in his ear. If he had known that this Frenchman had travelled with a show, and that his particular genius consisted in his ability to untie knots, it is not likely that he would have gone to sleep comfortably and left that expert to the unwatched and unhindered exercise of his powers. Of course the tallow faced Frenchman was gone in the morning, and of course there was nothing to prevent him from following Scarlett and from ascertaining the situation of the secret gold mine.

Happily the beautiful maiden, Athol Gray, was able to go down behind the gate and to hear every word uttered by Eldon, the desperado, in his very full instructions to his murderous gang for the waylaying and taking off of the unsuspecting Scarlett. An oversight on the part of Scarlett was his failure to tell Athol Gray that the lady whom he had most generously befriended, for whose unworthy sake he had been willing to take upon himself the reputation of a felon, was his mother-in-law.

Athol Gray suffered very poignantly under a false impression. Because her love was superior to the most distressing conditions she went to the relief of Red Scarlett when the devilishly vengeful Eldon had lassoed him and trussed him up in a painful manner, and again when he was threatened in the secret gold mine. The waters rose with a sudden ferocity and invaded this mine, but as well they removed a boulder that permitted a passage through the roof, and so while the villians were drowned the worthy people were enabled to get out—all except the demented Burns, who perished in guarding the golden treasure.

The story is not told with a perfect and "convincing" art; still its treasures are to be felt, and the reader will not sustain the inrush of the waters without emotion.

Boston and the Concord Fight.

The title of Ellen Chase's three large volumes, "The Beginnings of the American Revolution" (The Baker and Taylor Company), may be thought to be too sweeping, for though the author does take in the whole country in her preliminary survey, when she comes to the microscopic work, which gives value to her work, it is New England and more especially Boston that she has in mind. The whole third volume is devoted to the march of the British troops to Concord and back, even Paul Revere's ride being kept in the second volume, so that it is not unfair to regard all that precedes as only leading up to April 19, 1775.

The story is told clearly and entertainingly, a great merit when we consider the enormous mass of antiquarian detail the author has brought in and the larger body that she has considered and thrown out. From the evidence she has made up her mind as to what is the correct version and that alone she gives to her readers. Writing on such a large scale she describes every step of the ground, every person concerned, all matter that the antiquarians are wrangling about; she passes over the controversies and gives the probable facts. Sometimes she does this in her own words, but where she can she quotes the testimony of the people who saw these things, drawing from old letters, diaries, newspapers and official documents. The work is very well done; it brings the real history as close to the reader as writing can.

The minuteness with which the author tells her tale varies as it progresses. The first volume, which begins practically with the passage of the stamp act, spreads over nearly ten years; the second covers less than one, from the closing of the port of Boston to the starting of the British soldiers and Paul Revere's ride on the night of April 18; the third deals with one momentous day. Where England and the other colonies are brought in it is simply in explanation of what was going on in Boston. The eyes of the English speaking world were fixed then on that spunky little town as they never have been since, and the author enables us to know what Boston thought and said and did, almost as if we were there. Her preciseness of statement about seemingly unimportant matters may seem meticulous; it inspires respect in those who know how bitterly those matters are fought over by the local historians.

The volumes are illustrated with many interesting portraits and other pictures. They are provided with an index that should be very much fuller.

Views of Foreign Lands.

It is clear that, when Mr. E. W. Howe left Atchison to take "The Trip to the West Indies" (Crane and Company, Topeka, Kansas) for the benefit of his stomach, he had no intention of inflicting his impressions of the sights he saw on the readers of the *Globe*. The guide book information was good enough for him and them, and whenever it was convenient he put in a bit of that. The rival city, New York, is more interesting than foreign ports and he makes judicious and impartial comparisons, in which now one, now the other, metropolis has the advantage. It is mankind and also womankind that interests Mr. Howe, and this he observes and comments on, humorously or philosophically, as it parades before him on the steamer or in the ports he visits; he has an eye for news too, and chronicles candidly the doings of his family and of his friends in the Atchison-Leavenworth party, so that the folks at home may know what they are up to. It is a book of social philosophy in which travel is merely a incident. We infer that Mr. Howe's stomach was improved by the trip.

From "Twenty Years in the Himalaya" (Edward Arnold; Longmans, Green and Company) the reader will form the impression that Major the Hon. C. G. Bruce, is a thorough good fellow as well as an ardent mountain climber. He shared in several important climbing expeditions, with Mr. Mumm for instance and Dr. Longstaff and others, and tackled the range at many points between Kashmir and Nepal and Sikkim. His modesty, however, detracts from the interest of his book and makes it rather scrappy. He does not tell the full story usually, because some one else has done so already, and refers to the books. The reader's interest, however, is in Major Bruce and he feels disappointed when an adventure is stopped short in this way. The book is arranged geographically and not chronologically, which is another disadvantage, but there are many good stories and many exciting adventures, of which the narrator makes too little. His uniform good nature is very attractive.

The purpose of the trip which Mr. Walter Tyndale records in "Japan and the Japanese" (Macmillans) was to paint pictures, and those reproduced in his book are unusually interesting because they represent Japanese scenes in the terms of plain English water color drawings, with no Oriental perspective or mannerism and without the distortion of photographs. He painted many flower pictures which may be compared with the Japanese treatment of the same subjects. His text is merely an account of personal experiences which were in no way unusual or adventurous; he saw the things many have described through rather prosaic glasses, but he tells his impressions honestly and his ingenuousness gives them a certain interest.

Mr. Chesterton and Some Blake.

The volumes of the little "Popular Library of Art," edited by Edward Garnett and published by Duckworth and Company (E. P. Dutton and Company) have been naturally of varying merit, some very good, some less so, but all at any rate have given some account of the artist, who was the subject of the book. The reader who finds that Mr. G. K. Chesterton is the author of the "William Blake" in the series, will wonder what he is to expect from him; he may find something about Blake, he is sure to get plenty about other things.

Mr. Chesterton here holds himself in hand unusually well; he sticks to Blake assiduously. Not that the reader will get much idea of what Blake did or what it amounted to, but he will learn what Mr. Chesterton thinks of him as an engraver and particularly his opinion as to Blake's sanity. This, in substance, is that when Blake engraved or wrote what all can appreciate he was sane; that he believed in spirits who possessed him, as any sane man has a right to do, but that when he yielded to the instigation of the spirits in art or poetry, he was insane. All this is put paradoxically and brilliantly; it calls for occasional flippant outbursts in which Mr. Chesterton's momentary views on Ireland, on the present Government in England, on Mr. Tim Healy, on Herbert Spencer, on Christianity, on the eighteenth century and other matters are aired; to a comparison and a contrast with Aubrey Beardsley and to other bits of smartness, but on the whole he holds to Blake. As to Blake's art the reader must draw his own conclusions from the illustrations, which are good.

Mr. Keppel's Book.

The pleasant essays that Mr. Frederick Keppel has written on his favorite art under the title "The Golden Age of Engraving" are published in a second edition by the Baker and Taylor Company. They are accompanied by excellent and well selected reproductions of drawings, etchings and engravings. Some of the matter had appeared before in articles in periodicals or had been heard in lectures; a good deal, however, is new. Mr. Keppel is always instructive and entertaining when he writes on the subject of which he has expert knowledge, but his readers will probably take greater delight in his account of personal experiences, like the fragment of autobiography and the story of his relations with Whistler. Some fugitive pieces in prose and verse are included in this handsome volume.

Historical and Biographical.

Those unfamiliar with the story of Joan of Arc or dissatisfied with the many books that have been written about her of late may have the pleasure of reading the romantic tale in either of two biographies, both well written and unpretentious, and both by women, "Joan of Arc," by Grace James (E. P. Dutton and Company), which is of English construction, or "Jeanne d'Arc, the Maid of Orléans," by Mary Rogers Bangs (Houghton Mifflin Company), which is American. Why either should have been written no man can tell; it may be on account of the effort to sanctify her or it may be because Mark Twain chose to tell her story. There could be no hope of adding anything new to a subject that has been thoroughly threshed out. Miss James is more interested in the psychological side; she cannot waste the material she has found in her French sources and has interesting digressions on Gilles de Rais, Agnes Sorel and others; Miss Bangs holds closer to the historical side. Either book will prove satisfactory to the reader; neither will add any information for those who have studied the subject at all closely.

The chief characteristic of "The First Duke and Duchess of Newcastle-on Tyne" (Longmans, Green and Company), by the author of "A Life of Sir Kenelm Digby," is the ill nature of the author towards the persons he has undertaken to portray, particularly the Duchess. The chief cause of his almost feminine spitefulness seems to be the wife's rather fulsome eulogy of her husband. He leads his reader to expect an exposure of both humbugs and has gathered interesting accounts of both personages from sources of all kinds, some not easily accessible to the general public. These when read without his comments reveal nothing that is discreditable and much that is praiseworthy, and as the author goes on he finds much to praise in the Duke himself. He suggests that he bought his peerages, which was not uncommon under the Stuarts, that he was close in money matters and that he was put to shifts during his exile. The chief faults of the Duchess seem to be that she would write and that she was fond of her husband. The book might have been made much more interesting and intelligible if the author had written a straightforward story of his own instead of trying to rebut other writers.

No doubt Princess Caroline Murat could have written interesting reminiscences if she had begun "My Memoirs" (G. P. Putnam's Sons) earlier, or if she had been less reticent about herself. She was born and brought up at Bordertown, had her swing under the Second Empire, and lived in her later years in England, which she hated. There are some pleasing pictures of her girlhood and of court life, some amusing and biting comments on people, a very few entertaining stories; her comments on the Empress and the Prince Imperial would have more value if they had been set down before she quarrelled with Eugénie. The book is the pleasant, rather vague, talk of an old lady who has seen a good deal of the world and has known many people; it contains little of importance, however.

The series of French historical memoirs, selected and translated by E. Jules Méras, which the Sturgis and Walton Company is publishing, progresses. The two latest volumes deal with an interesting period and are unusually entertaining; one is C. P. Duclos's "Secret Memoirs of the Regency," the other Soulavie's "Madame de Pompadour." The scandals they contain may be in large part untrue; they have been accepted, at any rate, by most writers on the wicked days before the Revolution.

A musician's life, written as was once the fashion in Germany with much sentimentality and with the important facts left out, Franz von Seeburg's "Josef Haydn," has been translated by the Rev. J. M. Toohey (The Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, Ind.). It is a pretty romance of a very good young man, but will yield little information to those who are interested in Haydn, the composer.

A memorial to a distinguished Catholic dignitary will be found in "Character Glimpses of Most Reverend William Henry Elder, D. D." (Frederick Pustet and Company). Mgr. Elder was American born, he was Bishop of Natchez during the war and, succeeding Archbishop Purcell at Cincinnati, had the burden of putting that disturbed archdiocese in order again. The editors have procured letters written by him from the time he was a boy and a student at Mount St. Mary's till near the end and these letters constitute the chief part of the volume.

Those to whom history is revealed by charts and tables will welcome the ingenious construction by Mr. George E. Croscup of "A Synchronic Chart of American History," accompanied by many statistical tables. To those who can read it the whole history of the country is revealed at a glance. It is a method that was much in favor in the early part of the last century, but which has disappeared in later books. It is accompanied by a chronological text, following the later fashion, and with useful maps, prepared by Mr. Ernest D. Lewis. (Windsor Publishing Company, New York.)

An International Code.

In the laudable desire of putting an end to wars and securing harmony among the nations of the earth Mr. Girolamo Internoscia, an Italian, who has settled in Canada and has been admitted to the bar of the province of Quebec, has essayed to codify and to improve the principles of international law with some matters in the common law that admit of general application, and publishes his project in three languages, English, French and Italian, under the title "New Code of International Law" (The International Code Company, New York). It makes a handsome, well printed quarto of over 1,000 pages, arranged in three columns to the page, one for each language.

The first part is, in substance, a statement in code form of the principles of existing international law, modified by such improvements as have occurred to the author. It presents his ideas of what the law should be, rather than what it is. This he calls Public International Law. In the second part, which he names Private International Law, he treats of legal conditions and relations which he believes should be the same in all civilized countries, such as family relations, corporations, contracts, wills, bankruptcy, shipping laws and so forth; in preparing this part he was guided by the laws of the province of Quebec. The third part treats of the courts and magistrates that would have to be created to enforce the system.

Whatever may be thought of the practical utility of this essay, it is a brave and ingenious attempt toward a noble end, that is probably unattainable until the millennium comes.

The Scribner Meredith.

With Vol. XXIII, which is slightly belated, the fine subscription "Memorial" edition of "The Works of George Meredith," that Charles Scribner's Sons have published, is complete so far as the text is concerned. The promised volume of variants is yet to come. This volume contains the miscellaneous prose writings which, considering Meredith's long life and early journalistic days, it is rather surprising to find within the covers of a single volume. The contents are the essay on the idea of comedy, four introductions to books, half a dozen reviews and a few minor pieces. Of peculiar interest are the articles he contributed in 1866 from the seat of war in Italy to the *Morning Post*, which had engaged him as war correspondent.

Fiction.

There is talent in Emily Jenkinson's "Silverwool" (The Baker and Taylor Company), though the story is vague and unsatisfactory. The descriptions of nature and scenery are poetic, the characters are sketched vigorously and interest the reader, and the incidents, taken as separate scenes, are often dramatic. The reader is left to fill up the gaps between them, however, a rather difficult task, as the mental processes of the actors are peculiar. There is much talk of sheep and the plot turns on the adventures of one particular animal, but the author leaves the flocks out almost entirely and even cuts short the fight between the rams. It is the people that she holds up for observation, the contrast between the dalesmen and those with gypsy blood. She has watched them from the outside and does not seem to have studied their manner of thinking, preferring to animate them with her own ideas. There are fine figures among them; the humpbacked preacher, the sturdy lover, the light hearted girl, the vindictive father; there are eccentric oddities besides. The author's intensity of feeling does not seem warranted by the circumstances. Her picture of shepherd life falls far short of the true accounts which have appeared in two remarkable books published recently, Mr. W. H. Hudson's and "Mad Shepherds."

An oddity in fiction is Mr. John Trotwood Moore's "The Gift of the Grass" (Little, Brown and Company). It is difficult to make out whether it is horseflesh or the blue grass that excites the author most. He begins with the autobiography of a born pacer, almost from the moment of his birth in the blue grass region. The horse view of life is interesting enough to make the reader excuse outbursts of equine philology after the model of Gulliver's. Unfortunately humans come into the story, some of whom would discredit the Yahoos. These are involved in love affairs and other adventures which the equine narrator describes with a knowledge of the world that is surprising and which makes him obscure his own life history. The sensational plot is rather commonplace; it cuts short the space for the event to which the author is leading, the horserace and the winning of the pacing record. With that the book should have closed, for what follows is absurdly melodramatic. Where the author sticks to his horses he is often interesting; where he deals with other things he is inclined to foolishness.

Other Books.

In the admirable handbook of "Greek Religion" that Dr. Arthur Fairbanks has written (American Book Company) new ground is broken. This is not a manual of mythology nor a compendium of philosophy, but an attempt to ascertain what the Greeks really believed, what influenced the conduct of their lives, what public observances they held. It is a task in which the author has been helped by a theological training and even more by the acquaintance with art and archæology that is to be expected from the director of the Boston Museum. Dr. Fairbanks succeeds very well in keeping religion

Continued on Eighth Page.

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