SOME NEW BOOKS.

The Genius of Dostoievsky.

For the foreign reader FEODOR DOSTOIEVSKY'S *Insulted and Injured* (Macmillans) is perhaps the most readable, because it is the most temperate, of his novels. The likeness to Dickens, always barring the fact that this volume contains no humor, is more marked in this volume than in any of his great ones. The figure of Nelly one might assert with surety is studied from Little Nell.

To read Russian literature, more especially Russian fiction, is to enter a new world. We have to read a great deal of it to believe it real at all. The emotions are so quick and so exuberantly expressed that that in itself leads us into another world. In "The Brothers Karamazov" two ladies meet in a drawing room; in the first fifteen minutes they are embracing and kissing each other's hands and cheeks, but in the second fifteen minutes they are assaulting and beating each other and pulling each other's hair until they have to be separated. Naturally this is unconvincing to the Anglo-Saxon reader. We have no parallel to it. The chief tenet in the morality of our own race is undoubtedly self-control, and where that cannot be compassed, self-concealment. There may be instances in our American life where ladies meet on a friendly basis at first, and by some inadvertent word or revelation they part hating one another. The difference is that they do not in either case give free expression to the emotion. This swiftness and violence of feeling in the Russian temperament makes an odd combination with the Slav paralysis of the will. There never was a people so little convinced of the relation of cause and effect. The whole Russian people should be trained to recite in early childhood the nursery refrain

If at first you don't succeed
Try, try again.

There is a real Slavonic genius for giving up! They know and love and describe despair as do no other people on earth.

Any one of Dostoievsky's novels requires of the reader translation into a Russian atmosphere. This atmosphere first of all is one of great brutality among the lower classes; of exuberant emotion among all the people and the habit of giving full expression to emotion. All Russian men seem to be a prey to overstimulated brains and paralyzed wills; hence the overwhelming amount of talk compared with the paucity of action in their literature. The Russian women also are lacking in initiative, while their capacity for endurance is amazing. What surprises us throughout Russian literature is the secondary place which work falls into. Some one has already pointed out that in De Maupassant's "Une Vie" the heroine has nothing in the world to do but suffer. She makes no friends, she pays no visits, she apparently has no occupation; whenever she is depicted in the book she is discovering new causes for suffering, and suffering. In our race, however much we suffer, we punctuate our suffering with earning our living, taking diversion, loving our friends and family, avoiding our enemies, gardening, housecleaning or tending children. In short we interrupt suffering with activities which for the time being release us from ourselves. Not so among Latin and Slav races. They are more contained within themselves; they seem to have less power to live and think in the universal. They are as a race self-imprisoned. Moreover, a difficult transition from the Anglo-Saxon to the Russian atmosphere is that of finding oneself in a moral milieu where nothing is fixed. All morality is fluid; every question is open. The Russian constantly arraigns God and Destiny, but he is infinitely tender toward the failings of man. Apparently it does not occur to him that man can build a civilization where there is less suffering and that it is incumbent upon him to do it. Take, for example, Ivan's denouncement of Destiny in "The Brothers Karamazov":

Listen! I took the case of children only to make my case clearer. Of the other tears of humanity with which the earth is soaked from its crust to its centre, I will say nothing. I have narrowed my subject on purpose. I am a bug, and I recognize in all humility that I cannot understand why the world is arranged as it is. Men are themselves to blame, I suppose; they were given paradise, they wanted freedom, and stole fire from heaven, though they knew they would become unhappy, so there is no need to pity them. With my pitiful earthly, 'Euclidian understanding, all I know is that there is suffering and that there are none guilty; that cause follows effect, simply and directly; that everything flows and finds its level—but that's only Euclidian nonsense, I know that, and I can't consent to live by it! What comfort is it to me that there are none guilty and that cause follows effect simply and directly, and that I know it—I must have justice, or I will destroy myself. And not justice in some remote infinite time and space, but here on earth, and that I could see myself. I have believed in it. I want to see it, and if I am dead by then, let me rise again, for if it all happens without me, it will be too unfair. Surely I haven't suffered, simply that I, my crimes and my sufferings, may manure the soil of the future harmony for somebody else. I want to see with my own eyes the lion lie down with the lion and the victim rise up and embrace his murderer. I want to be there when every one suddenly understands what it has all been for. All the religions of the world are built on this longing, and I am a believer. But then there are the children, and what am I to do about them? That's a question I can't answer. For the hundredth time I repeat, there are numbers of questions, but I've only taken the children because in their case what I mean is so unanswerably clear. Listen! If all must suffer to pay for the eternal harmony, what have children to do with it, tell me, please? It's beyond all comprehension why they should suffer, and why they should pay for the harmony. Why should they, too, furnish material to enrich the soil for the harmony of the future? I understand solidarity in sin among men. I understand solidarity in retribution, too; but there can be no such solidarity with children. And if it is really true that they must share responsibility for all their fathers' crimes, such a truth is not of this world and is beyond my comprehension. * * * Oh, Alyosha, I am not blaspheming! I understand, of course, what an upheaval of the universe it will be when everything in heaven and earth blends in one hymn of praise and everything that lives and has lived cries aloud: "Thou art just, O Lord, for Thy ways are revealed." When the mother embraces the fiend who threw her child to the dogs, and all three cry aloud with tears, "Thou art just, O Lord!" then of course the crown of knowledge will be reached and all will be made clear. But what pulls me up here is that I can't accept that harmony. And while I am on earth I make haste to take my own measures. You see, Alyosha, perhaps it really may happen that if I live to that moment, or rise again to see it, I, too, perhaps, may cry aloud with the rest, looking at the mother embracing the child's torturer, "Thou art just, O Lord!" but I don't want to cry aloud then. While there is still time, I hasten to protect myself and so I renounce the higher harmony altogether. It's not worth the tears of that one tortured child who beat itself on the breast with its little fist and prayed, with its unexpiated tears, to "dear kind God"! It's not worth it, because those tears are unatoned for. They must be atoned for, or there can be no harmony.

Not once in this arraignment does it occur to the speaker that misery and unhappiness, disease and health are in man's hands to learn to control; that happiness and health are attained in such measure as will is applied to conditions; that we are here in an imperfect world, with only such alleviations of evil as we learn to make, is not a matter for brooding to the Anglo-Saxon. Our instinct is to say: "Life is so; what can be done about it?" The Russian instinct, on the contrary, is to say: "Life is so; how horrible! how unjust! Who made it so?" He turns to Destiny, never to himself as the active agency. Brooding over insoluble problems is a race characteristic of the Russian and it makes for unproductive thought.

If one accept the Russian characteristic and turn to the specific characteristics of Dostoievsky one finds the most marked one his unbounded love of humanity. That multitudinous mediocrity which disheartens most men inspires his liveliest emotions. He shows more real faith in an all loving God than Tolstoy. For Tolstoy's God is still very exacting, while Dostoievsky's is merely loving.

Vanya, who tells the story in "The Insulted and Injured," is a coherent character easily understood. The strain upon the reader's faith is made by Alyosha, the young hero who holds the faith and love of two women at once, one of whom he has betrayed already and the other of whom he considers marrying for her money. To the average mind Alyosha, despite his naivete, is simply an unprincipled young fool and sympathy is withdrawn from Natasha because it is hard to believe that a woman of character could care for such a man. It is hard to realize the social conditions which permit Alyosha to bring his young fiancee of 17 to see his mistress and to be present while these two discuss which one is most likely to make him permanently happy. He himself with true Slavonic paralysis of the will admits that he is quite unable to make a choice between the two women.

The Prince is a melodramatic villain and the scene in which he betrays his whole villainy to Vanya is overdrawn.

Structure is an art which Dostoievsky never mastered and the story of "The Insulted and Injured" holds the reader's attention entirely by its strong characterizations. The people are there, really living, thinking and suffering—one cannot say, acting—and one continually hopes that some result may be obtained by their interminable conversations. In the end Little Nellie dies and Alyosha goes off to marry Katya, while Natasha and Vanya walk in the garden and realize that they might have been happy together.

Dostoievsky always makes it a point to introduce into his novels an epileptic and strange, inapplicable dreams. Little Nellie serves as the medium for both these peculiarities in this case. The book is not so long nor so incoherent as "The Brothers Karamazov" or "Crime and Punishment." Vanya is a character that all readers can understand and sympathize with and throughout the book there are passages of amazing beauty and infinite human compassion. On the whole it is of all the novels perhaps the easiest and most comprehensible introduction to Dostoievsky's great but peculiar genius.

Literary Incense and Iconoclasm.

With how delightful a mixture of the emotions of pleasurable anticipation and dread of disappointment does one take up a volume of "studies in literature." That is CHARLES LEONARD MOORE'S description of his collected *Dial essays, Incense and Iconoclasm* (Putnams). For the cultured few the description is an attractive invitation, with promise of either joy, the raising of incense or being incensed; for the merely intelligent multitude it is something of a challenge. Mr. Moore's papers are marked with the stamp of literary professionalism; but the first distrust which that inspires is not long lived.

To make way for his ideas the essayist must demonstrate an attitude and mood not of forthright sincerity but of loyalty to his affectation. An essayist who was not affected would be unnatural. He would also be uninteresting. He plans surprises, and wonders at the surprise he causes. Sometimes the surprise fails, and then the entertainer is left in the position of a Latin salutatorian on commencement day waiting for his cheque to take its cue. But Mr. Moore is too skilled an artist to stand in any danger of such mishaps. At the precise moment when his audience may possibly begin to tire of the pure literary he gives them a spicy little paper on some homely topic fit to freshen the mind. He discusses "style," "The Solidarity of Literature," "The Novel and the Play," "The Root Ideas of Fiction," the various stock or standard motives and themes of fiction, "The Analytic Method," and with these profundities he intersperses such lighter, brighter topics as "The Splendid Years of Modern Literature," "The Educational System of the Elder Mr. Weller," "The Weather in Literature," and "The Magazine Girl." Mr. Moore is journalistic, not academic.

What about those old New Englanders "and us"? They were Greeks in the Tacitean sense of praising only their own achievements. "They stood shoulder to shoulder and cried each other up":

Like Moliere's learned ladies, they decided that no one should have any wit but themselves and their friends. Scattered over our country, they took with them wherever they went the totems of their tribe, and set them up to be worshipped by the outer barbarians. They had some excuse for this, because they, of all Americans, did acknowledge some sort of intellectual weights and measures. But it was inevitable, in the end, that the rule of their gods should be challenged, their sanctity questioned. Balled out of obedience, some of us are ready to say that the New England writers were respectable people who did good in their day, but that in the consideration of universal literature they are not much, and that even in the consideration of American literature they are second rate.

What separates, in literary achievement, New England from the rest of the country? "Its ingrained didactic tendency." Moral ideas are brought nearest to us in great creative art. The New England writers had not that "splendid insincerity" which is "the germinating kernel of the imagination that creates." They had to moralize, allegorize. What of "The Scarlet Letter"? Almost a genuine tragedy; but it leaves us "dull, depressed, dispirited, convinced that human life is a hideous mistake," instead of "ringing in our ears like the sound of a trumpet, toning our nerves like mountain air, making us feel that we are giants and able to contend against Fate itself." Is not Mr. Moore going, here, a little too fast? There is a suggestion of some misgiving, on the essayist's part, lest he may not have said just exactly what he meant, and no more, and of determination, having started, to go the full distance, when he selects "Wuthering Heights" to point his charge against Hawthorne's story.

In Jonathan Edwards, New England has "a genuinely great metaphysician." Her poets have phosphorescence rather than fire. But, if New England cannot wear the purple, have we those who are fit for such exaltation? Yes, two or three. First, Cooper, "known and valued all over the civilized world." "The Spy" is "a great novel," the sea tales, "in their combined rendering of elemental and human action," are "hardly equalled." His canvas excels Parkman in depiction of the American wilderness life. Cooper's Indians are "idealized"? Not more, says the essayist, than the heroes of Homer or the Highlanders of Scott; "and Leatherstocking is one of the great figures of prose fiction." Of course, there are the technical faults, much dwelt upon, of mechanical plot making, inanity in the minor characters, stilted conversation. But "his broad pictures of forest and lake stamp themselves on our minds. It is the epic of the making of an empire, the disappearance of a race, which we follow in his books."

Mr. Moore might profitably have stayed a little longer with Cooper. The common criticisms are a bit superficial. Many discriminating admirers of J. Fenimore will refuse to accept them readily. Many instances might be cited in which Cooper rises to dramatic heights, deriving his dramatic effects not merely from incident or coincidence but from an accurate appreciation of the forces of character. He drew many "types," and drew them excellently well. But, for a single example of first casual occurrence to the memory, where doubtless many better ones might be found, what of that tremendous scene in "The Two Admirals," where the bluff old sea dog who had planned to betray his friend doffed his treachery and poked the bow of his fighting ship into the battle clouds just as the conflict was beginning to go against the British Admiral? Back of the stirring "action" of that chapter, is there not a genuinely critical sense for "character"?

Cooper is, inevitably, compared to Scott. Sir Walter has his literary deficiencies; he is acclaimed, by divine right of merit compelling recognition, the story teller. Cooper has the same merits and the same defects. Little novelists command perfection of style and construction; great novelists sin greatly against the rule book.

Even the praise of Deerslayer-Hawkeye-Leatherstocking is checked short of its proper extension. Is there in all the world's fiction any one character more clearly visualized to a wide community of readers than this pioneer American woodsman? The mere physical reality is a fine achievement. But Leatherstocking is a living creation in more respects than those that appeal to the eye. A "minor" character was never better managed, to take one instance out of many, than the New Hampshire seaman, Ithuriel Bolt, in "Wing and Wing." And that is a story, one of the less read and talked about, a historical novel, Nelson at Naples, that so far as historical accuracy is concerned—Cooper whimsically challenged his critics to analyze and weigh it, confident in his readers—must be set immeasurably ahead of the recent books, of which there have been more than one or two, on the Emma Hamilton episode in Lord Horatio's life.

Is it hopelessly old fashioned to admire the leisurely, logical progress of such a tale as "Wing and Wing," "Le Feu-Follet," in the sub-title, rather more than the tense, nervous impressionism of so much of the present day fiction? Cooper had the old, healthy, tested and found sterling qualities and methods. And withal, still sticking to the random choice of a novel, we remember, though it is too many years since we read it, the trial of Raoul with a thrill in the recollection of Ghita's part in it. Perhaps memory overplays the part the Caraccioli girl played in it; if so, the more credit to Cooper's graphic manner. But was not the very spirit of drama in her conflict between regard for the sanctity of an oath and her love?

No doubt there is some melodrama in those chapters, too; but if both Raoul and Ithuriel Bolt are a little too braggadocious, is not there fine skill—not accident—in the toning of the two representations? Raoul's swagger was French; Bolt's was Yankee. And neither is contemptible as a character. Again, could "comic relief" be better managed than in the sparring of the stiff naval court with the contumacious Granite State witness? There is art, good because not obtrusive, in Cooper's way of letting the reader understand the elements of conflict while the protagonists, all at cross-purposes, are baffled.

Let the faults be granted; such as they are, they are entirely obvious. Suppose the businesslike windup, the careful disposition of the characters' after existence, one by one, after the story is done, is dreary to modern, improved tastes; the only contention is that Cooper's faults are not such as should be permitted to obscure in the least his great and undeniable powers and virtues.

On either side of Cooper Mr. Moore places Brockden Brown and Herman Melville. "Brown, a miracle of nature, a Quaker novelist, fascinated Shelley and was evidently deeply studied by Poe. In force of imagination, vividness of weird incident, intensity of picture, unshrinking realism, he is at least the equal of Hawthorne. * * * But if Hawthorne's world is a moonlight one Brown's is only lit by jagged flashes of lightning." Melville is immortal in "Moby Dick" and "Typee." Of these the first is "so Byronic, so strained and singular in its passion and theme that only a recurrence of morbid conditions of human nature could bring it into fashion." "Typee" is "sunny and graceful, and beautiful and irresponsible, and must always charm."

The next great name is that of Irving. The stories of Dutch New York are the best of Irving in respect of originality; "imagination, humor, creative force, all the ingredients of lasting work are in them, and the world has pretty well learned them by heart."

The case of Whitman vs. the Traditional Muse "is yet unadjudged." Poe, instead of a cheat and charlatan in respect of his claim to intellectuality, seems "a great thinker, an intellect lucid and far darting." As a technicist he is "the great tone master of modern literature." "Tone" does not belong to the epics and great works of prose fiction. "It requires, perhaps, a touch of morbidity or temperament to produce it." It has its place in the drama, the lyric, the short story:

Shakespeare's different pieces are keyed to all the notes of color, from ebon black to the purest gold of sunlight. Poe keeps in the main to the dark side of the spectrum. But within his range there are great differences in shade and always absolute certainty of effect. * * * As the modern world of letters has gone to Keats to learn style, the perfection of word and phrasing, so it has gone to Poe to learn tone, the truths of keeping an atmosphere in composition.

Mr. Moore has made a comfortable book, but not a lazy one. He is not didactic or disputatious; his outlook is wide, his spirit liberal. Not always persuasive, he is almost always stimulating. If any one can read three of his essays and say "There is nothing in this" he had better pity himself than blame the essayist.

Two Constantinoples.

Without being quite enough of a "reactionary impressionist" to put the picturesqueness of Stamboul before the good of a people in his esteem, H. C. DWIGHT does frankly, in *Constantinople Old and New* (Scribners), regret the changing of the face of the ancient town. Yet he counts it "among the most enlarging experiences" of his life to have been in Constantinople in 1908 watching a people "at one of those rare moments when it really lives." In that crisis, Mr. Dwight thinks, a race "accounted one of butchers" gave proof triumphant of "natural goodness and peaceableness." Certainly, with the whole machinery of government disorganized, that revolution was an innocent affair in contrast to the sanguinary scenes of similar turning points of European history.

In 1453, when the Turks took it, Constantinople had been Constantinople nearly 2,000 years; and as Sidney Whitman says, it was "the hearth of duplicity, of every form of intrigue, long before the Turks were ever heard of." Of all the races that have ruled the city since Byzantium began he calls the Turks the most honest; and Mr. Dwight also is frankly Turcophile. How the trail of history winds: When the city of Constantine was threatened by the Huns in the fourth century it was saved by a host of Saracens summoned from Asia. Three hundred and fifty years later those warriors of the desert fought the northern hordes at the other end of the Mediterranean. Duruy says: "From her geographic position Constantinople could not be the heir of Rome. The inheritance of the Western Empire was to belong to the Germanic race." But in the Eastern Empire "thanks to her strategic situation, Constantinople, the daughter of aged Rome, who bore on her brow from her very birth the wrinkles of her mother, alone remained standing like an isolated rock. For ten centuries she braved victoriously the assaults of the Mussulmans in the south and of the Slavic and Turanian tribes in the north."

Mr. Whitman ingeniously analyzes the Turkish character into "two distinct strains," one Turanian, the conquering Asiatic of Attila, Tamerlane, Ghengiz Khan; the other Arabic. The two were typically in conflict when the Sultan Selim I. caused the extermination of 40,000 Shiites and proposed to convert by force or extirpate the Christian population of his dominions, against the opposition of "the Arab element in the person of the Sheikh al Islam." Saladin, in this view, harmonized the antagonistic elements; and since then the Turks have recognized the duality, accepting calmly, sober and industrious as they are themselves, the severities of their rulers. Whether or not these writers succeed in convincing their readers of the genuineness of those admirable traits which after close observation they profess to believe fundamental in the racial character of "the unspeakable Turk," one has but to review Turkish history to realize that, being now in transition, the Turks will go far. Whoever can tell just how closely the revolution, the Balkan wars and the present war, with its promise of emergence of a remodelled Europe and Asia, are interwoven in logical sequence is fit to write the history of the world in the last five years and to predict its future.

Mr. Dwight exhibits in fine combination precisely those qualities which should go into the making of such a book. There is in his chapters nothing of the guide book. He knows the old city thoroughly and likes its people well enough to write of them appreciatively without sentimental excess of kindliness. He describes their homes, their public buildings, their streets, their mosques and processions, their fountains and gardens and markets and coffee houses, their feasts and daily work; and his finely printed pages are adorned with a notable collection of photographs. His eyewitness report of events in 1908 is decidedly entertaining; but a good many of Mr. Dwight's readers will probably give more lingering attention to his concluding analysis of the Turk as a man. Recent writers do not indorse the Gladstonian phrase of damnation, and as the world gets older people are more ready to see in those of other races, if not good, at least a common humanity that does not support the older attitude of suspicion against people of other lands because they are "foreigners."

In his modestly so-called "semi-philosophic finale" the author says:

One day I stopped on the quay to watch a cheering transport steam down the Bosporus. An old Turkish lady who happened to be passing stopped to watch it too.

"Poor things! Poor things!" she exclaimed. "The lions! You would think they were going to a wedding!" And then turning to me she asked: "Can you tell me, effendim, why it is that Europe is against us? Have we done no good in six hundred years?"

Mr. Dwight was able to see a Turkish point of view. Europe had "loudly announced" at the beginning that she would tolerate no change in the status quo, but had quickly acquiesced in the accomplished fact. Germany was the friend of Abdul Hamid. England was the friend of Kiamil Pasha. France was "the friend of everybody." Why did they not help? Without suggesting that Europe should have done otherwise, the author notes that there is "a logic of events which sometimes breaks through official twaddle," a just logic "drawing into a common destiny those who share common traditions and speak a common tongue." So, if his Turkish had been good enough, he might have said, "as so many other people were saying," that Turkey had not done any good in six hundred years, that "it is solely because of the evil you have done that you enjoy any renown in the world." He might have made accusation of a career of fire, slaughter, pillage and destruction; of injustice, laziness and falsehood in the common life; of lack of enterprise or desire for modernity; of general rottenness. He might have said: "Go back to your tents in Asia, and see if you will be capable of learning something in another six hundred years." But even if his Turkish had been adequate he would not have spoken so.

The Turk is incompetent, from the Western point of view. Mr. Dwight regards him with "a liberal disposition, thus explained:

There is something about him I cannot help liking—a simplicity, a manliness, a dignity. I like his fondness for water, and flowers and green meadows and spreading trees. I like his love of children. I like his perfect manners. I like his sobriety. I like his patience. I like the way he faces death. One of the things I like most about him is what has been perhaps most his undoing, his lack of any commercial instinct. I like, too, what no one has much noticed, the artistic side of him. * * * When war ceases, when murders take place no more in happier lands, when the last riot is quelled and the last negro lynched, it will be time to discuss whether the Turk is by nature more or less bloody than other men. * * * Pierre Loti may be as unsafe a guide as Mr. Gladstone. For blind praise is no more intelligent than blind condemnation. Neither leads one any nearer to understanding the strange case of the Turk.

This is argumentum ad hominem, a "tu quoque." A deeper striking consideration is this: Is there "something in Islam which automatically arrests the development of those who profess it"? The author is at pains to deny the thesis, an attention that to many will seem somewhat supererogatory. Mohammedanism is admirable to the open minded citizen of the world for "a nobility in its stern monotheism," its democracy and its hygienic principles. It is a religion built for a primitive people and will be most difficult to modernize if for nothing else because it takes so much time to be a good Mohammedan. The essential weakness of it as a bit of machinery to be incorporated in modern life is its fatalism, its discounting of the power of the human will. The man who believes that empires rise or fall because of the will of God "has no chance against the man, however less a philosopher, who believes that his destiny lies in his own hand."

What would, say, two generations of "universal education" do for Turkey? And by that the author means "no more than the three Rs, enough history and geography to know that Turkey is neither the largest nor the most ancient empire in the world, and some fundamental scientific notions." The "common people" among the Turks are surprisingly illiterate and hold fantastic views of the world and their place in it.

Turkey's troubles are in great part due to this ignorance; in part to the nature of the empire which the Turk conquered:

If he had happened, like ourselves, into a remote and practically empty land he might have developed his own civilization. Or if he had occupied a country inhabited by a single race he would have stood a better chance. Or if, again, he had appeared on the scene a few centuries earlier, before Europe had had time to get so far ahead of him, and before the spread of learning and an increasing ease of communications made it increasingly difficult for one race to absorb another, he might have succeeded in assimilating the different peoples who came under his sway. Why the conquerors did not exterminate or forcibly convert the conquered Christians has always been a question with me. It may have been a real humanity on the part of the early Sultans, * * * or it may have been a politic deference to new European neighbors. In any case I am convinced that it was, from the Turkish point of view, a mistake. For the Turk has never been able to complete his conquest.

In Mr. Dwight's view the whole matter narrows down to the fact that the Turk is still "paying the price of the invader." He created a form of government which at its best depended on the spoils of war and which could not last. So long as his frontiers were advancing the Turk was able to hold his territories in hand. He long held a place in the world by his strength in comparison with smaller empires or as a buffer in the rivalries of greater ones. "But now, stripped of his most distant and most ungovernable provinces, enlightened by humiliation as to the real quality of his greatness, he may, let us hope, put aside illusion and pretence and give himself to the humbler problems of common life." If he does that, the author concludes, and does it sincerely, "he may find in the end that he has unwittingly reached a greatness beyond that won for him by the Janissaries of old."

Russian Sketches.

The remarkable difference between Russian literature and our own is that Russian literature is mainly truthful and real; ours is artificial and unreal. The distinction makes itself very clearly felt when one compares a book like TOURGUEF'S *Russian Silhouettes* (Scribners) with our own short story. We make the short story according to a convention; we give the reader a period of suspense leading up to a denouement with a sense of finality. The Russian writer merely holds up the mirror to some bit of life: a tired school teacher, driving home after fetching her month's salary, who has a sudden fleeting vision of youth and home; an old man whose wife after fifty years of marriage is dying and for the first time he realizes that he has never given her a soft word or a considerate look, he had never once thought of her or noticed her more than if she had been a dog or a cat, and yet she had lit the stove every day and had cooked and baked and fetched water and chopped wood; an old stupid peasant who cannot sleep for wondering why the world is so wicked; but just these glimpses of life are told with so poignant a sympathy that they remain always and grave an impress in our minds. Almost the only examples we have of this genre in English, so numerous and so ably done in France and Russia, are the two volumes by John Galsworthy entitled "A Motley" and "A Commentary." There is no mistaking the influence which Tchekoff has had upon Galsworthy, and it is an influence for good. If only we could urge upon our timid American writers to tear a leaf from the book of Russia, what a literature we might have, instead of the conventional, manufactured matter which now fills our magazines!

Here then in Tchekoff's sketches is truth and reality. The art of the work consists not in any conventional method of procedure, but in delicacy of perception, the noting of fine shades of thought, emotion and action and in sympathetic and precise handling. The volume leaves one not so much with a sense of the author's cleverness in contrasting plots, for these stories have no more plot than life itself, as with a sense of knowing the heart and soul of Russia, the suffering, the limitations, the struggles of its people, the landscape, the cruelties of nature, the wanton ways of destiny.

Henry James once said of Turgenieff that his mind was as free from prejudice as a photographic film. It is this lack of intellectual prejudice in the Slav makeup which surprises us in their literature; the more so that as a nation we are perhaps more tied to tradition, more ruled by convention than any other nation of what we call Western civilization.

Russia is incomparably older as a nation than America, and much younger and more vital in intellectual development. The Russian author looks at life as a spectacle where every question of morality and convenience is still open.

The astonishing open mindedness of the Russian is the first quality that we remark; the second is the profound pessimism of the Russian. Whether this has to do with climatic conditions or whether it is the result of a disappointed idealism, or whether it is the fundamental lack of faith in cause and effect it is hard to decide.

In the present volume of Tchekoff's "Russian Silhouettes" there are twenty-nine stories and sketches. Of these seventeen come under the head of tragedies of cruelty, superstition or stupidity. Six are little satires; three are humorous episodes, and three are just short sketches of incidents. It is worthy of note that in the last division (for the book is divided into Stories of Childhood, Stories of Youth, Light and Shadow) there is no humor at all; only unlighted gloom. These thirteen stories are all of wickedness, meanness, dishonesty, unalleviated tragedy and that special Russian disease, paralysis of the will. More than ever we realize in reading them that happiness is an effort of the will, and that anything like success in life depends upon faith in the transforming power of will. Of this faith America has a large share and Russia none.

A less realistic and therefore less typically Russian writer is Fedor Sologub, younger than Tchekoff or Gorky or Kuprin; he perhaps heralds a new era in Russian literature.

His volume "The Sweet Scented Name" is a volume of fairy stories, with a slight touch of Andersen in them; of fables, not so witty as Stevenson's, and of slight poetic stories. Of this latter sort "Lohengrin" is one of the most charming, dealing with a young bookbinder who falls in love with a school teacher who sits in front of him at the opera. He woos his lady love hidden in a cloud of mystery and under an assumed name, as does the hero of the opera, desiring also to be loved for himself alone. The reader, indeed perhaps the heroine in the story expects a prince in disguise and finds only a "skilled bookbinder" with a lively imagination.

Perhaps Mashenka was a little disappointed also that everything had turned out so simple and ordinary. But in spite of everything Lohengrin would always remain her Lohengrin, and the image of her dream would never fade away, for love is not only stronger than death, but it is able to triumph over the terrible dullness of ordinary, everyday life.

"The Sweet Scented Name" itself is a story of an angel sent to earth because she was too proud to dance before an ill child. In coming to earth she lost her name, which was "one of purity and fragrance." All her earthly life she felt as if she wanted to remember something she had once known, but she could not think what it was. She would ask her father why we could not hear the sunshine or see the scent of roses. It was evident that she belonged to another sphere and could not be made wholly at home on earth. Only when out of tenderness of heart she went to see a little dying peasant girl, and to distract her, got up and danced, clapping her hands together, did she suddenly remember that the sweet scented name she had longed for was her own heavenly name, and then she knew why she had been sent to earth.

An equally charming and poetic tale is that of Turandina, a sort of Russian Pandora, who out of curiosity disclosed the future to mankind and was banished from her kingdom. This story is quite unblemished by a moral, but from it one can realize that what one calls for with the universal will comes, though even then a man may be unable to retain it.

"The Kiss of the Unborn" is a sad but very lovely little tale carrying the moral that until we make life livable for the living we dare not regret the unborn.

Here is a sample of the fables contained:

There is upon the earth a very wonderful little stick which will cause all things to disappear and turn your life into a dream if you touch your head with it.

If you don't like your life just take the little stick and put it to one of your temples—and suddenly all you didn't like will become a dream and you will start something quite new.

Of that sort is the wonderful little stick.

It would take a philosopher indeed to name the little stick. On the whole Sologub's stories, while they are less distressing, more imaginative and poetic than other Russian tales, are also less national. They might have been derived from any northern country. There is a gentleness, an acquiescence, a poetic glamour which has no parallel certainly in the uncompromising realism of Tolstoy, Gorky, Andrieff, Dostoievsky and Tchekoff.

An Austrian Iliad.

A novel for the confirmed novel reader is *The Little Iliad* by MAURICE HEWLETT (Lippincott), as light as yeast, as gay as a carnival; as unreal as a fairy story. Indeed but for diction and sentence structure the book might almost be mistaken for one by the author of "The Glory of Clementina," and Helena in this volume of Hewlett's is not at all unlike the apotheosis of the reformed artist in Locke's book. Here is the editor's and publisher's ideal combination, "a young love story with a happy ending," and all told in the gayest of conversational narrative. There are no problems, no social economics, no heavily serious people, but a group as chic and as light as the very smartest of the "would-be smarts" could exact. There is a pretty Highland setting, and a pretty Viareggio setting (unless we mistake the description of Gironeggio), there are pretty doll-like women, handsome men of leisure, epigrams in plenty, wealth and idleness.

The justification of the title is that a modern Helen of Troy, now of Austria, being informed by a gallant Highland Paris that she was unhappy with her tyrannical German lord, escaped to the Highlands, where the fine old chief and all his five sons (one being a priest was exempt) and all the friends of the five sons fell in love with her and petted and made much of her until her Nietzschian lord bought a yacht and entered the harbor and stormed the castle, all in despite of the fact that he had locomotor ataxia very badly.

There is also a jealous American woman who perched upon her husband's narrow knees and called him "Hub," while she looked like a speckled hen on a fence. There are English girls, who looked like boys all day and dressed for dinner as if they were going to a children's party. The hero and his travelling companion watched the procession of nations and knew that every fat man with a rolled neck who made jokes and punctuated them with bowing salutations from the hips was German; every dark man with large ears and handsome bulky ladies attached to his person was a Jew; every man with a wild beard and mild eyes was a Russian, and so forth.

The heroine, for example, "had a starry face, a kind of divine, remote limpidity, as if she smiled in her own atmosphere, apart from the dust and heat of ours. She carried herself rarely, and though she was plainly dressed she had the air of jewels about her, especially in her hair. I mean that her head seemed to be lifting a coronet."

Who in these days could resist a heroine of that sort? For the short period when small, plain heroines with high, white foreheads and red flannel wrappers obtained popularity through the genius of the Bronte girls is passed, and so far as the appearance of heroines in fiction goes we are Mid-Victorian again. The only difference now is that they are not required to weep and swoon so constantly.

The heroine's husband had "square bulk and hardy eyes, the assured air of the comfortably cushioned in this world, that air of a corner seat, which the great, especially the foreign great, are seldom without." He was an Austrian. "You can always tell," says the hero. "If ever you see Germans who seem sorry about it, and anxious to be something else, they are Austrians. Very nice people, except to each other."

The Austrian knew everybody the world over and talked about everything—literature, art and politics. "Voltaire was a pose with Byron. He wore him like plate armor. He scorned himself, that young man, and took pains to be scornful of the world in order to let himself down. There never was any man of his ability and force who got less out of the world than your Lord Byron." This is an excellent bit of criticism upon art and life by the Austrian ogre husband.

The hero, if you choose among so many heroes to single Hector out, was a serious young man, who Hamletlike believed himself born to straighten out an evil world. He "wrestled with life," so his creator tells us, though all we see him doing is travelling at random through various pleasure resorts falling in love with other men's wives. However, he does this decorously and quite after a Sir Galahad fashion. He made no demands upon the lady except that she recognize and confess her unhappiness with the Austrian ogre:

He was at the stage of love when the consciousness of love itself is a triumph. It is the elated feeling which a poet has when he has written a poem, which a hen has when she has laid an egg. You go clucking about; you lift your feet up; your head is in the stars.

It is to Sir Galahad's home in the Highlands that the starry heroine flees when she is made to understand that she is unhappy. She says of the people of the land: "I am lost in admiration of two things. First that you are so good looking, and next that you are so gentle. It seems beneath your dignity to be savage, or to speak disdainfully to servants."

The Austrian ogre who tracked his down Helena to the Highlands said of its people: "They are like the Greeks, these Gaels—like Greeks in the rain. You have the clan Nestor, the clan Tydeus, the clan Peleus, the clan Atreus. But you have no Homer to sing them. You have Ossian who weeps and has a hump. Yes; Ossian has a hump and the reader wants an umbrella."

There is also in the book a noble lady called Lady Larbert. She wore a tiara incomparably and was so smart she had no need whatever for seeming to be so. So she never did, otherwise she took no more active part in the little comedy.

One must not forget that the heroine danced with the hero's brother. All Austrians dance, but to dance with her "was like floating with a rose leaf, like steering a foam bubble. She was exquisitely yet impalpably there; a leading spirit drawing you on, inexhaustible, yet unsuspected." Indeed, not only in dancing, but at all times she was the Mid-Victorian ideal of woman, ardent, devoted, yielding, gentle, kind. There is no telling what would have become of her if she had not always been rich and comfortable and petted and admired.

What does become of her is that the Austrian ogre dies and she marries the Highland chief, father of her rescuer Hector and of all the amorous brothers.

This novel ought to sell in hundreds of thousands. So entirely innocuous and frothy and unreal is it. The enthusiasm of its publishers is unbounded. There is not a long sentence or an unusual thought in it from end to end. But Maurice Hewlett, author of "Little Novels in Italy," "The Queen's Quair" and "Earthwork out of Tuscany," owes himself something very different from this. Genius must not stoop to conquer the populace, and Mr. Hewlett is too great an artist to write like Locke.

OHIO'S NOVEL GUIDE BOOK.

Oberlin Professor Puts Forth "See Ohio First," for Motorists.

"See Ohio First" is by the distinguished geologist and glacialist Prof. G. Frederick Wright of Oberlin College, who is also president of the Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society. Prof. Wright assumes that reasonable beings who plan to drive about Ohio would naturally like to know something about the country they are driving through.

What, for instance, they might inquire, is the history of those well defined ridges that border Lake Erie? What is the oldest land in the State? What and where are the prehistoric mounds? Where did these old boulders come from?

Such questions as these this small paper covered volume sets out to answer, says the Kansas City *Star*. Prof. Wright gives this account of the lake ridges, telling of those ancient times when Lake Erie emptied into the Mississippi by way of Fort Wayne:

"In the northern part of the State one of the most striking relics of the glacial period is the lake ridges. These really beach lines, marking the shore of Lake Erie when the water was raised their level by an ice dam which held up the outlet eastward through the Mohawk Valley and that of the St. Lawrence. While the ice dam lasted, over its outlets the water of Lake Erie was raised up to the level of the lowest pass in the Mississippi, which was at Fort Wayne, Ind. At this place there is chanted as wide as that part of the Niagara below Buffalo and as deep as leading from the Maumee into the Wabash River. Its elevation is 770 feet above the sea, is 200 feet higher than that of Lake Erie. The place where this glacial lake is crossed is known from Concaut through Ashtabula, * * * There are two lower beaches marking the water level which was maintained by this glacial lake as the ice had melted back to open outlets into Grand River, Mich., and thence from the ice free portions of Lake Michigan having an outlet through the Chicago drainage canal into the Illinois River. The 150 foot beach or ridge is most prominent and is followed by most of the east and west roads. In Cleveland the electric cars rise to it at the Lorain street car barns."

That discussion and others of a similar nature give the traveller an intelligible setting for his journey. The lake ridges are much more interesting to him if he knows they were once shore of the lake, and if he can picture to himself the landscape of those ancient times. After a general introduction the geological and historical features of the State a large number of motor tours are given in detail, with information about the scenery along the way.

Cleveland is described as built on an immense delta of sand brought into glacial lake when the level was from 100 to 200 feet above Lake Erie. There are similar descriptions of other important towns. Each route is treated in this way, with account of the glacial deposits, the work of the mound builders, the Indian trails, the ancient burial grounds and the like.

A motor tour in Ohio with such a guidebook might be made an instructive as well as an interesting event. To-day the State universities are offering individuals are going to get similar guidebooks, with the addition of maps and the usual road information for other States.

GREAT SEAL OF CHARLES II.

Impression