

vast affair of great rivers and impenetrable forests and idleness and assassination. Not so very long ago—the year before last, perhaps—a young Englishman who was about to go round the world wished to make some acquaintance with the interior of South America. He looked it up on the map, and delivered himself of the following: “I see Buenos Ayres has a million inhabitants. I expect I shall be able to hire a horse there.” What he said afterwards I do not know. . . . This ignorance is all the more strange when the fact is taken into account that a very large amount of English capital is invested in South American securities—and particularly in those of the Argentine Republic. One would have thought that investors would know something—however vague—about South America. Perhaps they do, and are keeping it quiet for their own mysterious reasons.

Mr. Koebel removes the last shred of excuse for ignorance so far as Argentina is concerned. He gives it all in his book—even a fine series of photographs which show conclusively how very civilised most of the people look, and how very up-to-date a city is Buenos Ayres. (One photograph in particular is reminiscent of that portion of Piccadilly which is opposite the Ritz Hotel.) Naturally he devotes most of his book to a consideration of the business side of the Republic—especially to railways and sheep—but there are many delightful passages descriptive of his travels and his experiences of the people. Particular attention must be drawn to the admirable chapter upon the British emigrant, which, while upon the whole flattering to our susceptibilities, strikes a note of warning. It seems that even in his capacity for labour the British workman is sometimes surpassed by those of southern countries.

“Italian labour,” says Mr. Koebel, “has been accepted with alacrity in the bulk: that of the British—such little as has been offered—is looked upon dubiously and with no little misgiving. It is the common belief at home that the daily labour of an Englishman exceeds that of a southerner, such as an Italian. In many parts of the world I hope and believe this to be true. Unfortunately, a long experience has proved that it cannot be generally accepted in Argentina. There the common opinion has almost passed into a proverb that the Britisher, whether mechanic or agriculturalist, is of little account on the first rung of the ladder. Unless a foreman, he may be ranked as of the useless class, it is considered.”

However, it is satisfactory to find that in the higher ranks the British colonist is at least equal to any other in the world. In recommending a most interesting work, it is worthy of note that, considering the vast amount of information which “Argentina Past and Present” contains and the manner in which it is produced, it is decidedly a cheap book.

RECENT HISTORY.*

The historical world at its *rentrée des vacances* is confronted by two incidents, a heavy loss compensated in some measure by a solid gain. The loss, it need hardly be said, is the death of one who was, I suppose, the most eminent of living literary historians—Albert Vandal. Taine and Lecky were followed, only a year ago, by the historian of the Inquisition, Dr. Lea of Philadelphia. With the possible exception of the Italian, Ferrero, there is, so far as I can remember, no one living at the present moment who is capable of making the double appeal that these great writers made to the cultivated reader at large in various lands and to the professed historical student. Born in Paris in 1853, Albert Vandal was in a special sense the dis-

ciple, and successor, of Albert Sorel, to whose chair of diplomatic history he was promoted in 1906 at Taine's now famous Ecole des Sciences Politiques. An artist and enthusiast of an extremely elevated character, struggling always against constitutional melancholy and an historical conscience which imposed upon him a most exhausting and rigorous method in research, Vandal recalls in certain respects America's greatest historian, Francis Parkman. Like Parkman, he was a great believer in topographical atmosphere. But he received from an early date more discipline, guidance, and direction. Sorel absorbed some of his best years. The Eastern Question of the second half of the eighteenth century and the remodelling of the Russo-Germanic frontier seemed to him the most important unexplored keyhole in recent international history. Vandal took this up, and produced his magisterial study on Louis XV. and Elizabeth of Russia. More than any one else, I suppose, he revealed how largely faulty diplomacy was responsible for the collapse of the old French monarchy. The knowledge of the Franco-Russian archives thus obtained proved a solid foundation for what is perhaps Vandal's most durable monument, “Napoleon et Alexandre I^{er},” which was twice crowned by the French Academy, obtained the Prix Gobert in 1893 and 1894, and the publication of which was completed by Plon, Nourrit in 1896. The break-up of the understanding arrived at at Tilsit between Napoleon and the northern Colossus is here treated as it deserves to be, as the critical phase of the Corsican's career; and the theory that Allah made Napoleon mad because he intended to destroy him is effectually shattered. Napoleon acted as he did under invisible but irresistible pressure. He was never really less absolute than when he appeared most so, in 1809-10, and Seeley's theory that Great Britain was an ever-present thorn in the flesh to him is abundantly justified. Vandal shows how Napoleon always regarded himself in a double light as a Roman Emperor and as a protector of Europe against northern barbarians. He looked upon himself and England (such is Vandal's vigorous figure) as rival suitors for the hand of Dame Europe, and he was perplexed and tortured by the lady, the moment brute force was removed, preferring England's gifts to his. That Russia should disregard her faithful Achilles and turn a soft ear to these underhand blandishments seemed to him an outrage, and as a symptom far more serious than the running sore which was beginning to afflict him in Portugal. Vandal shows with a master hand how these considerations, in the effusion of time, left Napoleon virtually no choice but to act as he did. In the end the conqueror of Austerlitz recovered most, if not all, of his old bellicose self-confidence, and Vandal gives us some very picturesque snapshots of the parvenu Emperor confounding his attendance in 1812 by singing snatches of the republican war songs of his martial youth. His power of fathoming men is shown nowhere more admirably than in the scene in which he wheedles Murat back to his old-time loyalty. He explained to his intimates the calculated mixture of resentment and blarney which was necessary to overcome “that Italian pantaloons”:

“He has a good heart; he still loves me better than his lazzaroni. When he is with me he is mine; but when away from me, like all these men of weak character, he belongs to these who surround him and flatter him. He is under the dominion of his wife [Napoleon's own sister], who puts a hundred silly ideas into his head. He would be clamouring for the throne of Poland but for her and her wild dream of a united Italian Kingdom. Well, never mind! Jerome shall have the Polish Crown, sure enough. It'll make him a splendid kingdom. But he must do, *achieve* something. These Poles are fanatics for glory.”

He went on to complain bitterly of all the kings he had made—their silly vanity and insane penchant for Divine right and primogeniture. Here we have Napoleon to the life, depicted by a complete master. It is the same in his third great book, which is certainly one of the glories

* “Longmans' Political History.” Vol. VI. By Prof. A. F. Pollard, 7s. 6d. (Longmans.)—“The Great Civil War in Dorset.” By A. R. Bayley, F.R.Hist.S. 10s. 6d. net. (Taunton: Barnicott & Pearce.)—“Madame Royale, the Last Dauphine.” By Joseph Turquan. Edited and translated by the Lady Theodora Davidson. 15s. net. (Unwin.)

of contemporary history, "L'Avènement de Bonaparte" (one of the late Mr. Meredith's favourite books). In this he shows exactly the composition of the minority upon which the consulship of Napoleon depended, and how Marengo turned it into a majority. Vandal's personal distinction, his eloquence and his fine enlightened patriotism, make his loss to the Academy and to France an irreplaceable one.

But at the same time with this loss an historical triumph has to be acclaimed in the completion of the "Political History of England," under the editorship of Dr. Hunt and Dr. Poole, by the issue on September 20 of Professor Pollard's volume (Vol. VI.) on England from 1547 to 1603. We have not had time yet to examine the work in detail, but can say at once that it is deserving in the fullest sense of the critical place that it fills in the series—for after the Norman conquest there would probably be little dispute that the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth have been the most momentous in our national history. Professor Pollard does a good deal to defend Foxe the martyrologist from the aspersions of the neo-Catholics, he delineates Elizabeth as representing that hesitant frame of mind in politics which has so often in more recent times decided the fate of parties, and he insists on 1569 as the most critical year of the reign in which, after a long struggle and innumerable fluctuations, the government finally came down on the side of the new forces as opposed to the feudal and conservative elements represented by the old religion, the Norfolk influence, and the championship of Mary of Scots. The picture of Elizabeth solemnly deliberating on her death-bed as to whom she shall appoint successor is shown to be completely fabulous. She had, in the circumstances, no power to bequeath the crown, and still less any belief in such a power of disposition, which had been set at naught so completely in the case of her despotic father's will and testament. The matter of the succession, as she very well knew, had long been practically decided. She said nothing about it. Her thoughts were absorbed elsewhere. Mr. Pollard pays a high tribute to the queen's understanding of her subjects, and to her power of exciting their patriotic and loyal enthusiasm by speech, in which that penetrating knowledge is most subtly reflected. The power to govern has never, perhaps, been purchased at a greater price in servitude and self-subjugation than it was by Elizabeth Tudor. The genealogies and maps will be of the utmost service to students. Apart from these the author's most original contributions to the study of this most perplexing and difficult reign will be found in chapters seven, eight, ten, eleven, fifteen, sixteen, and twenty-four.

The volume completes the series, of which it was the last to be commissioned. The programme of six years ago has now been carried out *in extenso* with hardly any alterations, and Messrs. Longmans are heartily to be complimented on their enterprise. From the first volume by Dr. Hodgkin to the last by Mr. Sidney Low, the work has been maintained in most capable and efficient hands, who have been liberally paid for their contributions. The editing has been anything but a sinecure, and so far have the editors carried their zeal that quite independently of their criticisms of the authors under review, they have consistently criticised and corrected one another. This reciprocal commentary of experts, it has been thought by some observers, if it could be only collected from the proof-sheets and published in a separate volume, would have an educational value transcending that of all the other volumes put together. But the educational value of some of these it would be difficult at present to exaggerate. They supply collectively a continuous view of English political history, adequately indexed and illustrated with maps and tables, from the earliest period to the close

of the reign of Victoria. They have been written in a strictly impartial spirit, they embody the most salient results of modern research, and they supply in uniform appendixes, upon which great labour has been expended, a summary view of sources and materials both ancient and modern. The result cannot fail by degrees to penetrate the text-books and set up a higher standard of historical accuracy and hypothesis than has yet been known. Eventually it will make itself felt in the general histories and text-books of European history in use upon the Continent, from which we shall expect gradually to see the more egregious errors triumphantly expunged. To reference libraries the book will, for many years to come, be indispensable. Last but not least, we must compliment the publishers upon the extremely moderate price of seven and sixpence, which has brought the work within the range of a vast public to whom the now popular half a guinea would be prohibitive.

From the severer and scholastic type we may now turn for a minute to welcome specimens of local or, more frankly, popular history, in Mr. A. R. Bayley's "The Great Civil War in Dorset" and Joseph Turquan's "Madame Royale." Both are good specimens of the class to which they belong. Mr. Bayley owes much in original encouragement to the great authority on the period, Professor Firth, and much in execution to the run of the rare Dorset collections of Mr. Broadley of Bradpole. Dorset, of course, was not a great theatre of the war; but sieges of Sherborne, Wareham, Weymouth, and Lyme Regis (of which we have many strange particulars) formed important episodes at more than one crisis; while the nineteen days spent by Charles II. in the county after Worcester were by far the most perilous in the whole course of his flight, the common people of Dorset being persistent Commonwealth men. The narrative is well handled, and the book will, no doubt, find a place in Dorset libraries alongside of Roberts and Mayo. The production and organisation of the book is less satisfactory than the labour that has gone to compile it. The text is forbiddingly solid, and the author is much too sparing of generalising, dividing his paragraphs, or summing up the results of his investigations.

Joseph Turquan's spicy and caustic work as an anecdotic historian is already well known in England. He has practically exhausted the entourage of Napoleon; for he has already chronicled the Bonaparte sisters, Josephine, Hortense, Tallien, Jerome, Napoleon in Love, and kindred themes. He does for the *Grandes Amoureuses* the same spirited and devoted service that Mr. Gribble does for the *Grands Amoureux*. The unhappy Dauphiness and Duchesse d'Angoulême would seem at first sight to be hardly a suitable subject for his mordant pen. Lenôtre has already treated it at considerable length. M. Turquan attributes the moroseness of the lady in her later years to marriage rather than to early misfortune. He does not mention the English rumour that she had been outraged during her imprisonment in the Temple. Her faults of pride and temper were in many opinions redeemed by the romance of her later heroism and the exploits of "the only man in the family," as the great Napoleon called her. The great should always be criticised severely. M. Turquan is strongly of this opinion, and the result is that he is un-faillingly entertaining.

Other works of recent issue important for all students to know are Mr. G. G. Coulton's "A Medieval Garner," a collection of 330 documentary fragments (Constable, 1910) ranging from 1100 to 1500, representing every side, and certainly not least the humorous side, of medieval existence; and the other a new edition of Professor Tout's crown Handbook of English History, incorporating the reign of Edward the Peacemaker.

THOMAS SECCOMBE.

Novel Notes.

BARNABY. By R. Ramsay. 6s. (Hutchinson.)

Personation must be an awkward situation when you agree to personate a widow and then discover that your *soi-disant* husband is alive. Miss Ramsay gets her heroine into this fix, after an excellent opening. What happens to Susan and Barnaby Hill when the latter discovers the former in his mother's house, and what happens when the real wife turns up later—all this is the proper secret of the authoress, and a reviewer dare not divulge it. That is the worst of a novel like this. However, it can be warmly commended to readers who want something fresh in the way of sensations. There is fox-hunting in it; there are some capital scenes; and there is a literary skill which manipulates the plot past several awkward corners. Add to these the aforesaid plot, and you have freshness unforced. The Duchess, Mélisande the dressmaker, Lady Henrietta, Julia, and Susan herself are alive from first to last; even the outrageous Julia, who is Miss Casby rampant, does not become unreal. Miss Ramsay has cleverly used Barnaby's former relations with Julia to cover the growth of his affection for the woman who was in name, but in nothing else, his wife, and one can forgive the neat twist at the end which unravels the knot—unravels, and ties it again. For the solution of this paradox, see the novel itself.

MY LADY OF INTRIGUE. By Humfrey Jordan. 6s. (Blackwood.)

The ancient cycles of romance are named from their heroes as Arthurian and Carolingian; of modern novels there can be few divisions to equal in extent that which we would venture to call the Richelieu Cycle. It is now a good many years since Mr. Stanley Weyman discovered this mine, and novelists ever since have thronged in their hundreds to this Klondyke of romance. The wonder is that so many of them have fared so well and found ore of distinct value. Mr. Jordan's is a new name to us, and he comes late to the adventure, but there is no doubt as to his fitness for it and his success. His hero, John Fort, is of the true breed—an English gentleman adventurer who suddenly finds himself entangled in the intrigues of the court of Louis. In the Duchesse de Chevreuse he meets a lady worthy of such a squire, but the author has done wisely in making the love-story a one-sided one. It makes the tale convincing without any loss of interest to leave her "Hercules," as she calls him, unrewarded by the Duchesse, except for her grateful acknowledgment of his quixotic and unselfish devotion. The great Cardinal has not here the important part he is made to fill in most of the stories of this cycle. But he is very skilfully introduced, and his personality is made to colour the whole fabric of the plot. Mr. Jordan in this book is excellently imitative, but his careful workmanship speaks of laurels to be won in newer fields.

THE YOUNG IDEA. By Frank A. Swinnerton. 6s. (Chatto & Windus.)

Not many of us manage to retain the cherished ideals which distinguished our early outlook on life. Our gods prove false all too quickly; the shock of disillusionment shatters the many-coloured spectacles of youth, and in their stead we assume the drab-coloured ones of age and bitter experience. This comedy of environment portrays with remarkable insight the "growing-pains" of a girl's mind as she begins to realise some of the ugliness of the world into which she is thrown. Hilda Vernon is a clerk in a London business house, and the mainstay of her brother and sister. The three occupy a little flat in Maida Vale, and their individual characteristics are vividly sketched with the aid of pithy dialogue. The younger

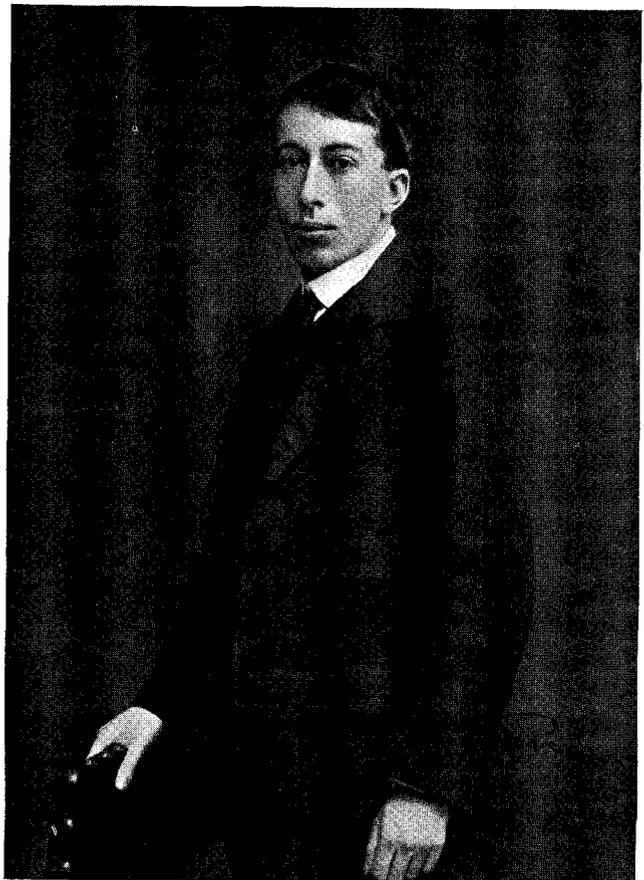


Photo by Russell & Sons

Mr. Frank A. Swinnerton.

sister, a high-spirited girl of eighteen, is a delightful embodiment of all the wholesome virtues and lovable failings of buoyant youth. The brother, on the other hand, is a selfish, indolent fellow, abominably rude to his doting sisters, whose circle of acquaintances is limited to the questionable friends of their brother's choosing. Persecuted at the office by the unwelcome attentions of the firm's junior partner, Hilda feels the bitter helplessness of her position as wage-earner. Moreover, her brother becomes involved in a squalid entanglement with a married woman. The world, once so fresh and pure, is tainted in her eyes; doubts begin to crowd in upon her. "In her agony, Hilda longed to believe in the beauty of something, in the purity of some idea, or the integrity of an individual. She longed for something to which she could lift her eyes." Into the breach steps her neighbour, Galbraith, a man with a scheme, battling to escape "the muffled tragedy of a clerk's life," striving heart and soul to assert his individuality. By sheer strength of character he regenerated her faith in mankind and herself. "The Young Idea" contains some distinctly clever and humorous characterisation founded on shrewd observation, and in its pages the spirit of resolute youth, often bruised but never crushed, finds eloquent expression.

LADY MOLLY OF SCOTLAND YARD. By the Baroness Orczy. 6s. (Cassell.)

The female Sherlock Holmes was bound to arrive in fiction, and it was as inevitable that she should have her subordinate, Mary Granard, who plays the rôle of Watson. Lady Molly, however, works in connection with Scotland Yard, and she has neither chemistry nor the violin as recreations. The twelve stories in which her feminine wit is described are of the ordinary detective class, put together with the authoress's well-known skill. In the last of them, Lady Molly succeeds in clearing her husband of suspicion on a charge of murder, and this enables her to retire from detective work. It also enables Miss Granard to explain how her dear lady managed to keep her position in society