

calities, as well as of the authorities—stated clearly and supported by ingenious argument. The fault of the book is that it is too complete—every detail of these campaigns is narrated as circumstantially and confidently as if the author had had access to a file of newspapers of the period. For example, after showing that it is very probable that the insurrection which drew Varus from the Weser was among the Bructeri, he proceeds to take this hypothesis as a fixed fact, and, by pointing out the successive stages of the route which Varus ought to have followed, brings him to the Dören Pass, in the Osning range, south of Osnaburg. The hypothesis is in itself reasonable, and is admirably worked out in detail; only it has not a particle of positive evidence in its favor. Mommsen's words ought to be constantly in one's mind, in this and similar problems: "Mehrere Lösungen einer Aufgabe, von denen nur eine richtig sein kann, sind so lange keine, als es nicht gelingt die ausschliessliche Zulässigkeit einer derselben zu erweisen." The campaign in which Germanicus visited the battle-field of the Teutoburgian Forest occupies nearly half of the book. The other campaigns are treated with the same exhaustive knowledge of the literature upon the subject, the same personal familiarity with the ground, and the same arbitrary assumption of the author's premises, from which his notion of the campaigns is deduced with great perspicuity and vivacity. There are five maps. These, and the fulness of local and antiquarian detail, make the treatise very helpful to any student of ancient Germany.

ILLUSTRATED HOLIDAY BOOKS.

Engravings on Wood, by Members of the Society of American Wood-Engravers. With an Introduction and Description by William M. Laffan. Harper & Bros. Folio.

Odes and Sonnets. By John Keats. With Illustrative Designs by Will H. Low. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

The Deserted Village. By Oliver Goldsmith. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

Faust: the Legend and the Poem. By William S. Walsh. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

Masterpieces of Modern Painters. New York: A. J. Bishop.

THE volume which heads our list is unquestionably the most important and significant of the art productions of the year. The mere existence of a Society of American Wood-Engravers is a fact that marks the revolution in their art which has occurred in little more than a decade. To those who ask, What is the American School of which we hear? this collection of examples is a superb answer; and foreign artists everywhere cannot fail to be impressed by such an exhibition of technical skill, manifested not by a handful of engravers, but by fifteen, with a surprising evenness on a high level. Some well-known names are wanting from the list of contributors, but as no list of membership is given, we have no means of judging how exhaustive is the present representation. It would not, we think, have been unbecoming to publish in connection with these plates simple biographical details concerning the makers of them—the birthplace and age, the training received, etc. As it is, judging by their names, twelve are manifestly Americans or of English descent, one other may be, while two bear foreign names, and of these one is German-born. The art which they have undertaken to interpret in black and white is likewise preponderantly American, being foreign in only two in-

stances. The European critic of this volume, therefore, has to do with a national manifestation almost *pur sang*.

One other observation before we pass from the personnel: a woman takes her place beside her male peers. She is, we are told, the only one admitted to the Society, and this of itself is a certificate of proficiency. We are much mistaken if Miss Powell's success do not inspire other women to take up a calling which is so favorable to their sex, since it can be pursued at home under the best conditions there attainable, and at a great distance, if need be, from the scene of publication.

The plates number twenty-five in all, of varying sizes, mostly large. Twenty-three are from oil-paintings, one from a fresco by Giotto, and one from a drawing by Mr. Abbey. They all illustrate the immediate cause of the recent notable advance in wood-engraving, viz., photography upon the block. As to fidelity of interpretation, Mr. Swain Gifford is reported entirely pleased with Mr. H. Wolf's rendering of his "Roadside." And we remark that whereas our American school of painting is preëminently addicted to landscape, our engravers have here chosen in only four instances from that branch, the remaining five-sixths being from figure-pieces—pieces, at least, in which the figures outweigh the setting. Since every subject was the free choice of the engraver, this circumstance seems worth recording by the way. Finally, the arrangement of the plates is alphabetical by artists, and Mr. Bernstrom, partly from his interesting subject (Carl Marr's "Mystery of Life"), and partly from the skill with which he has handled it, opens the series with a certain distinction.

The critic here, as elsewhere, finds it hard to separate the theme from the execution. If that be flat, ungrammatical, unfashionable, repulsive, the excellence of the translator's technique is in danger of being underrated. It is safe to say that a layman casually turning these leaves would, but for Mr. Cole's reputation, pass by his rendering of Giotto with hardly a second glance. The archaic quality of the composition is not to our modern taste, and the engraving appears no less bald and formal. In selecting this cut (his only one) Mr. Cole has more conspicuously than all his associates challenged the judgment not of the public, but of the connoisseur. Mr. Laffan, who furnishes the letterpress, could not, in the nature of the case, be critical; and his discourse, much open to question in its generalities, when it comes to personal appreciation largely consists of phrases having little meaning, and mostly concerned in bestowing praise all around with as great a variety of expression as was practicable. He has, however, done no more than justice to Messrs. A. W. Drake of the *Century* and Charles Parsons of *Harper's* for their part in bringing about the revolution signalized by this volume, though we should have felt bound to associate with these names that of Mr. W. Lewis Fraser of the former magazine. We shall not attempt to pass judgment on the present collection seriatim. Two engravings—the one by Mr. Wolf, already mentioned above, the other by Mr. Frank French, likewise after an oil painting, by G. Gaul—are remarkable examples of faithful reproduction of the works of the artists, not only in color, but in the suggestion of the medium in which they are painted. In these examples the engravers have abandoned for the moment the consciousness of the skilful cutting of the line and of nice "tooling." To Mr. Wolf's achievement we assign the first place. It would be hardly possible, on a block of this size, to handle such a multiplicity of detail in a more masterly manner.

We forget the line entirely, and think only of the extraordinary reproduction of the color and texture of the original. As admirable examples of dexterity in cutting the line and skill in fooling, the engraving of Mr. F. S. King after Blashfield, that of Mr. R. A. Muller after a picture by J. G. Brown, and the head of William M. Hunt, by Mr. G. Kruell, are most conspicuous. The criticism which the collection is likely to encounter from European connoisseurs is in the direction of over-refinement. The execution lacks that which foreign engravers strive to attain—boldness, originality, and daring invention in the rendering of textures. Their productions are free from the suggestion of slavish subjection to softness and sameness of line. They aim at richness of color and brilliancy of effect. The contrast is well pointed by Mr. E. Kingsley, whose two examples are marked by more originality of treatment than is seen in many of the others, but are marred by groping after smoothness of texture and by too close cutting.

Mr. Low has undertaken to fill the difficult position of Illustrator in Ordinary to that poetical king John Keats. Two years ago 'Lamia' was published with his illustrations, and it is now followed by a volume of 'Odes and Sonnets,' which in its turn is to be followed, we believe, by other volumes. The success of the 'Lamia' was so extraordinary as to make the publication of a new set of drawings by the same artist and illustrating the same poet peculiarly hazardous. The traditional ill-success of "sequels" and "second parts" was to be feared for it. As the human mind is constituted, "the same thing" becomes wearisome, even if it is a fine thing; and of a series of publications in the same vein the first will always seem to us to have been the best, because it had the freshness of surprise which its successors can never have in the same degree. One must improve in order to seem to hold one's ground. Let us hasten to say that Mr. Low is in the line of progress, and that the work in his present volume is a decided advance upon his earlier effort.

He has hardly been so fortunate in his subject as in the 'Lamia.' While the illustration of a number of short, unrelated poems gives greater scope for that "variety" so much desired of publishers, it entails a lack of the unity of impression which, in a volume like the 'Lamia,' binds the whole together, and increases the force of each drawing by that of all the others. In the decoration of a hall, each fresco helps all the others, and the effect of the whole is one; in a miscellaneous collection of pictures, each is apt to hurt more than it helps its neighbor. The present book is more in the nature of the gallery of pictures than of the nobly decorated hall, and though the pictures are all by the same hand, they are too varied in style and disconnected in subject to be helped by their proximity. The result is a somewhat scattering effect, and an accentuation of that unevenness of merit which is perhaps inevitable in such a collection of work. But this unevenness is not present in a greater degree than in the 'Lamia,' or than in most other such long-breath'd works; or, if it is more noticeable, it is from the higher plane of the better, rather than from the lower plane of the weaker parts. Many of the drawings in the 'Odes and Sonnets' are much better than any but one or two of those in the 'Lamia,' and the least good are as good as the average of those in the earlier book. Of the seventeen principal drawings to the 'Odes and Sonnets' at least twelve are above the average of the work in 'Lamia,' and several of them are better than anything in the latter.

Perhaps the best thing in the book is the frontispiece, a "Nymph" or "Flora," with arms

full of blossoming apple boughs, in which the sweetness and charm of Mr. Low's best work are combined with a high degree of solid and accurate draughtsmanship. The naked Muse of the title-page, pure and lofty in her nudity, is drawn also with a knowledge of form and a fine severity of style that serve to make more incomprehensible the artist's occasional lapses. One of these lapses, in the drawing of the legs and feet of the little winged genius who holds the book bearing the inscription, mars the otherwise charming composition of the dedication. Of the illustrations proper, the best is decidedly that to the "Ode to Psyche," where the sleeping goddess is as lovely a figure as one is likely to find in modern art, and the next best is perhaps that to the sonnet beginning "Bards of Passion and of Mirth," in which the figure of Diana, who has very little right to be there, is so charming that we readily forgive her her somewhat unwarrantable intrusion. The purity of the nude in the hands of a true artist could find no better exemplification than in these drawings, which might well be placed in the hands of youths and virgins for their educational value. Other notable drawings are that entitled "The Eve of St. Mark," a charming figure

"With forehead pressed against the window pane," while she reads

"A curious volume, patched and torn,"

and that to the "Ode on Melancholy," with its interesting background of the huddled roofs of mediæval Florence, seen through a loggia with curious symbolic statues.

Mr. Low has throughout taken considerable liberty with his text, his drawings being often parallel with the idea of the poet rather than strictly illustrative of it; but this is not to be wondered at with a text so often unillustratable. Doubtless his imagination has worked the better for the freedom he has allowed it, and the results are finer than would have come of a stricter adherence to the letter of his original. When we have a volume of pictures such as these, graceful in composition, delicate in execution, and full of pure sentiment and poetic feeling, surely we need not quarrel with the artist because we cannot always see how he found the inspiration for them in the poems to which they are attached.

Besides the drawings, there are dainty floral decorations at the top and bottom of each page, and the cover, lining-paper, etc., are also designed by Mr. Low. The so-called photogravure reproductions by the Forbes Company are fairly good, the print, paper, and general make-up are handsome, and the whole book is in every way worthy to take a high place among the most sumptuous of the holiday publications.

Illustration by etching is perhaps rather commoner in Philadelphia, where the votaries of the art are numerous, than elsewhere in this country. It seldom, however, reaches the front rank, and two holiday volumes from that city now before us agree in the mediocrity of their designs. For Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" six landscapes have been furnished by M. M. Taylor. These are not wholly devoid of feeling for nature, but there is little poetry in them, much crudity of drawing, and a general muddiness. With one exception, however, they add to the attractiveness of the book, which is well printed in large characters. "The Swain responsive as the Milkmaid sung" is, sentimentally considered, comical, and as etching the plate is the most unfortunate of the series.

"Faust: the Legend and the Poem," also contains six etchings, by Hermann Faber, but the best are unoriginal and artificial, and the poorest absolutely uninspired. The contrast with earlier attempts by great masters is here much

more cruel than in the case of the "Deserted Village." The accompanying text is not the poem, but an essay upon its origin and development, and an analysis of both parts. This will be found useful by many, especially as Mr. Walsh has availed himself of Engel's "Zusammenstellung." But his speculation about the meaning of the poem would have been tempered, for his readers at least, if he had cited from vol. vii. of the *Goethe-Jahrbuch* G. Dehio's "Altitalienische Gemälde als Quelle zum Faust." Here again we have a pretty book, if the pictorial adornment is feeble.

Not much can or need be said of the "Masterpieces of Modern Painters." Eleven photogravures after English, French, German, Bohemian, Hungarian, and Russian painters, contemporary or very recent, fill, with the descriptive letterpress, an oblong folio, and make a seemingly attractive or even sumptuous book. The not badly imagined title-page, too, gives a number of portraits of the painters represented by their works. On examination, however, one sees that the photogravures are at second hand from engravings or even from photographs, so that distinctness and fineness of gradation are all lost, and a blurred and washed-out look characterizes the series as a whole. The selection is popular enough—Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair," Wagner's "Chariot Race," Frith's "Railway Station," Munkacsy's "Christ Before Pilate," Meissonier's "La Rixe," Detaille's "Defence of Champigny," and other canvases scarcely less well known; with Turner's "Ancient Italy," from the engraving.

FISHER'S CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

The History of the Christian Church. By George Park Fisher, D. D., LL. D. With maps. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1887. Svo, pp. 701.

To the student of history there is no department so fascinating as that which relates to the development and the struggles of the Christian Church. Rightly considered, it touches upon every side of human activity—mental, moral, and political. To it belong the influences which moulded the barbarian conquerors of the Roman Empire, which presided over the foundation of the nations of Europe, which dominated the Middle Ages, and which have partly resisted and partly assisted the evolution of modern civilization. It concerns itself inseparably with the secular annals of every Christian state, which cannot be rightly comprehended without reference to it; and inasmuch as man's intellect and soul are nobler than the body which they control, so the history of the Church embraces not only the political growth of the European commonwealths, but the vastly more momentous topics of their spiritual and moral advance, the conceptions which have prevailed as to man's place in the universe and his relations to his Creator and his fellow-beings, and the result of these conceptions in directing his daily life. Sometimes a factor of progress, and sometimes of reaction, the influence of religion has always been potent, and no one can pretend to estimate the development of the past or to forecast the future of humanity without an accurate knowledge of that wonderful and complex organization which has manifested itself in so many aspects through the successive centuries, and which we roughly designate under the comprehensive term of the Christian Church.

As an aid to the understanding of the origin, development, and career of this omnipresent factor in modern thought and civilization, Professor Fisher's new work deserves a hearty

welcome. It was a bold undertaking to present so vast a subject in the compass of a single volume of moderate size, for the author has rightly estimated his task as not confined to the external manifestations of Christianity. He classifies (pp. 2, 3) the chief topics for consideration in five divisions: (1.) Missions, comprehending the conversion of the Roman Empire, the reduction of the Barbarians, and the efforts to spread a knowledge of the Gospel throughout the world. (2.) Church polity, including the relations between Church and State, which in the Middle Ages led to the hierarchical development and the supremacy of the papacy, and in modern times has presented every variety of connection between the spiritual and the temporal authorities. (3.) Doctrine, embracing the infinite shades of belief which Christians have extracted from Scripture, and through which they have sought to explain the purposes of God and the destiny of man. (4.) The Christian Life, showing the varied influence which Christianity has exercised as a practical system of morality, controlling the lives of its disciples; and, (5.) Worship, under which are comprised the successive rituals of the Church, its observance, liturgies, hymns, music, and architecture.

It will be seen that this is a tolerably extensive outline, and one which few scholars in this country could satisfactorily fill up. Professor Fisher's previous works have shown that he possesses the wide acquirements requisite to the undertaking, and the clearness of exposition necessary to render his knowledge available. Yet we cannot but regret that he should not have allowed himself a broader canvas on which to depict the infinite details that crowd each other in the presentation. In these days of microscopic research, when whole volumes are devoted to the elucidation of the infinitely little, it is a relief to meet with a competent scholar who is content with telling, not all that he knows, but only so much as he thinks important for his reader to know; but, notwithstanding this, we occasionally are made to feel that Professor Fisher is doing himself and his subject injustice in the effort at compression. It is evident that he often would fain say more than he does, that he would like to pause for a moment, and amplify some point of interest, instead of barely alluding to it and hurrying on to another. He is so anxious to omit nothing of moment, and at the same time to keep within the bounds which he has assigned to himself, that he is sometimes reduced to merely cataloguing that which he would evidently much prefer to develop.

In this superabundance of material the most arduous task is that of selection. Here the personal equation inevitably becomes dominant, and probably no two persons would agree as to the relative importance of individual subjects and the proportion of space to be severally allotted to them. For ourselves, we are free to think that in this the author has sometimes made a mistake. Only four-ninths of the book are devoted to the first fifteen centuries, while five-ninths are given to the Reformation and its results up to the present day. In the earlier portion many topics of interest thus of necessity receive inadequate treatment. The marked influence of paganism and polytheism over the development of Latin Christianity is barely alluded to; the rise and results of the persecuting spirit are worthy of much fuller development than is accorded to them; the German mystics of the fourteenth century are insufficiently treated, and the cognate heresy of the Beghards or Brethren of the Free Spirit is not even alluded to. In the latter portion of the volume the controversies within the early Anglican Church are presented in much detail, while the history of Jansenism and Port Royal is dismissed with