

tion enough appears to make it tolerably sure that the English Government had had no hostile designs upon California. But Mr. Bancroft's account does not point out what is equally significant, namely, that not Lord Palmerston, but his predecessor, must have given Seymour instructions, if any were given, with reference to California. Quite impossible, nevertheless, is the supposition that Peel's Government, which so long and carefully sought every chance to avoid coming to blows about Oregon, should at that very moment have been meditating the deep-laid scheme which the brave son of Commodore Sloat wrested from the lips of the nefarious and abject Englishmen, while he enjoyed their hospitality at the legendary dinner.

We hasten to point out, further, in the briefest manner, a few of the more significant novelties in the rest of this volume. In the story of Stockton's rule, Mr. Bancroft presents (p. 271) conclusive evidence that Larkin, acting in his character as confidential agent of our Government, undertook on Stockton's behalf to make peaceful overtures to Castro in the South, and that these overtures were the occasion for Castro's known attempt, August 7, to enter into negotiations with Stockton. Stockton's insolent rejection of Castro's offer at the time when it was made, appears in this way in a worse light than ever before. On page 344, sq., is given what may be called the first authentic account of the savage little fight at San Pascual, a fight of which Gén. S. W. Kearny chose to give so false an official report. Mr. Bancroft's account is made up from a number of not previously accessible sources, especially those collected by Judge Hayes of Los Angeles, in papers which are among the most noteworthy possessions of the Bancroft library. After the conquest history is completed, the most significant novelty of the volume seems to be the detailed plan of San Francisco in 1848, together with the long explanatory notes, founded in part upon testimony not previously accessible to historical students.

Of matters that seem to us doubtful, in Mr. Bancroft's views in this volume, we venture in conclusion to lay stress upon the reasoning (p. 226) whereby the hesitation of Commodore Sloat at Monterey, before raising the flag, is made to depend rather upon Larkin's advice than upon the consequences of Frémont's hostile action. To the writer of the account before us, the Bear-Flag hostilities would seem to have been additional reasons urging Sloat to quick action. We are disposed to regard their influence upon Sloat as only tending to increase his previous hesitation; and a careful reading of Mr. Bancroft's arguments has not convinced us of the contrary. Larkin, indeed, plainly advised the delay, and Sloat, during the time of the delay, doubtless often spoke as if, for his own part, he was ready to act at once. But Sloat had spoken just so, long before, at Mazatlan; and yet, as we have seen, he had afterwards hesitated. That Frémont and the Bear Flag can have been encouraging to the mind of such a man, we still must doubt. It is impossible to acquit "the Bear" of having done all the mischief that he could, in this matter as well as in every other. The valiant beast of the Sonoma flag was an unmitigated nuisance to California, and we cannot grant him the poor honor of having urged on Sloat to action.

With this volume on the conquest, Mr. Bancroft has reached the boundary line between the early history and the history of the modern State. We hope that there will be no falling off in the later and most difficult portions of the task. Thus far there is good reason for congratulation. The history of early California has been written in great detail, and in a fashion that

must make the book readable only in single chapters or episodes—never as one connected whole. Yet nowhere else can we find so thorough an account of the beginnings of an important community. It is an axiom of historical study that to make the exact truth accessible, must be a true end in itself for the investigator. If this be so, then no one should complain that Mr. Bancroft's book deals so exhaustively with provincial annals. Out of provinces grow, if not always nations, then at least organic and vastly important members of great nations. No one can doubt that the Pacific States have a very significant history before them. In the future, near or remote, no sensible man will doubt the value of the elaborate research which has now made the early portions of this history both accessible and comprehensible for all time. We have expressed our decided disagreement with some features of Mr. Bancroft's plan. We have no doubt of the great importance of what has resulted.

A Muramasa Blade. By Louis Wertheimer. Boston: Ticknor & Co.

In this unique work, Mr. Wertheimer has essayed a task none the less difficult because others, with no mean pretensions to learning and literary skill, have signally failed in it. These were unable to succeed because it is impossible to call the past into resurrection—to "recreate the rose with all its members"—by the science of archaeology alone. One must have, in addition, keen insight and warm sympathy to write a story of life in the Japan of five hundred years ago that will translate easily into the vernacular, and seem, when read by a native, the product of the soil. Yet this is what Mr. Wertheimer has attempted to do, and we think he has succeeded, excepting a few sentences serving to an American reader as hooks and eyes of speech. The story is truly and minutely Japanese in English. A Tokio *hanashika* (story-teller), under his mat-awning in Yanagi Chō, might tell to his open-mouthed auditors this tale of a sword, and not shock one of his auditors. And this, notwithstanding that such listeners are as critical of idiomatic accuracy as is a four-year-old child of the integrity of bed-time lore.

Improbable as many of the incidents and characters are, from our point of view, and impossible as some of them certainly are in the eye of science, all are in harmony with what the natives call *Yamato Damashii* (the spirit of ancient Japan)—that fierce code of honor which formed the ethics of gentlemen and the religion of heroes like Mutto and Sennoské of the story. So faithfully has the author conceived his palingenesis of a vanished ideal, that in one or two points the narrative becomes to us a ludicrous farce, though in the oblique eye the most orthodox tragedy. In reading, we unconsciously suffered our risibilities to rise. On reflection, we felt like the outraged auditor in a theatre, in whose vicinity a boor guffaws during the death-scene. Possibly Mr. Wertheimer might have pleased the Japanese fancy a little less, and satisfied the Occidental taste somewhat more, had he sooner rung down the curtain on certain acts. Yet we are not so sure, remembering our own sensations in a Japanese theatre, when an actor committing *hara-kiri* occupied twenty-two minutes, by the watch, in disembowelling the bag of blood which did duty for his abdominal economy. The author evidently has his eye on the gallery gods afar off, for in chapter x. the endurance of Yamagawa is prolonged beyond belief. The aged servitor opens the region below the navel in a "regulation cut of six inches long and one deep." While thus ripped open, he indulges in a conversation with his young master; and

then, clapping his hand to his gushing midriff, listens bolt upright and calmly to the reading of his prolix will by a comrade. In print, this document occupies twelve solid octavo pages. Even supposing the soldier to be a fair scholar and able to read Chinese fluently—hardly so, we think, in the fourteenth century—the perusal must have required twenty minutes. Now, supposing the *seppuku* of that age was not in the severing of the great artery in front of the spine, but only an "inch deep," still, such a power of endurance in so old a man savors more of the Japanese stage than of physical possibility. It is, to say the least, not good art, and we question whether Bakin would countenance it.

Apart from this criticism, we cannot but pronounce Mr. Wertheimer's literary effort a superb triumph. His knowledge of Japanese history is as exact as it is copious. His references to tradition are to the taste of literary orthodoxy as tested by the latest researches. His local coloring is from actual study and an experience of thirteen years in the language and the land. Despite the literal faithfulness to the *samurai's* ideal, the romance is one of absorbing interest to the Western reader. It pictures the bright and glorious side of feudalism. Then, the soldier's calling was the noblest, war was a profession, the sword was the soul of the samurai, the forger of the bright true blade a pet of princes, and the possessor of a Muramasa was envied of millions. Yet the very brilliancy of the picture, while helping us to understand the gleam which even now lights up the bronze stolidity of a Japanese face when *hara-kiri* or swords are mentioned, shows also the arc of horrible darkness in which the lower strata of humanity rotted under pride and tax and the swashbuckler's tool. We remember only too well the sight of slashed corpses lying in the streets of Tokio, and our feelings at stumbling, while travelling at night, over dead bodies in the public roads, of seeing beggars allowed to drown in sight of withheld but convenient help, of bloody dogs hacked in head, body, and limbs—for the sword once drawn must not be sheathed till it tasted blood. With all true reformers, we rejoice that the reign of the sword, even of the Muramasa blade, with its consequent brutality, is over, and that the humanity of the beggar and pariah is now a fact recognized in law and custom. The reading of this book, which held us fascinated to the end, has been a powerful reminder that the horrors and wonders of the feudalism which we witnessed in the days of 1870 and 1871 are now at an end.

The subject is worthy of the noble literary and artistic treatment given it in this book. The illustrations are remarkable in that they have not been contaminated or voided of their spirit by alien hands. The five copper-plate engravings are by Nakamura Munéhiro of Tokio, who has caught the old-time spirit fully. The three-score and ten drawings of a native artist now in this country are on the average good; in some places, as in war scenes, they approach excellence. They have been reproduced by photo-lithography. Print, binding, and index are of the first class. In the silk-bound copies the Kiōto brocade, of Mikado red inwoven with chrysanthemums, makes a fitting case for this mirror of Oriental chivalry.

Memoirs of the Rev. J. Lewis Diman, D.D., late Professor of History and Political Economy in Brown University. Compiled from his Letters, Journals, and Writings, and the Recollections of his Friends. By Caroline Hazard. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1887.

THE materials for this biography were scanty. Prof. Diman's outward life was uneventful, and he did not make his private letters a record of

inner experience, or pour out in them learning, wit, and impressions of men and affairs, any more than the secrets of conscience and growth. This volume consequently deals almost entirely with external matters. The subject of it was born of excellent New England stock, and piously reared. The tradition of his family, his youthful discipline, and his own nature united to direct him to the choice of the ministry as his profession; and, after completing his college course at Brown University and having spent some time at a parsonage and at Andover, he went abroad and resided at several of the German universities, where he saw and listened to the famous doctors of the time, and was well received by them. At the end of two years, in the course of which he visited the principal places of interest in middle and western Europe, he returned to this country and was settled over a church in Fall River, and later in Brookline. He had been from the first impatient of dogma, and attached to the spiritual rather than the theological elements in the Christian faith, and his mind continued to grow more liberal and comprehensive. He was the first of his denomination to exchange pulpits with Unitarian clergymen. This breadth of view and freedom of practice led to adverse comment and dissatisfaction on the part of the more rigid in the faith, and when, at the age of thirty-three, he was called to the professorship of history and political economy at Brown University, it was probably a welcome and certainly a most satisfactory solution of a position which would have constantly grown in difficulty. He continued, however, to preach, and received invitations to accept pastoral charges many times, including one from the Unitarians. His ripe conviction upon the matter is perhaps expressed in declining a call to the Second Church in Boston: "For success in the ministry, a man needs to be the mouthpiece of a sect, or at least to be able to express himself with great distinctness on certain disputed points. On many of these points my own judgment is in suspense, and it would be hypocrisy for me to assume to speak with authority; and in such a position as that which the minister of the Second Church would almost of necessity hold, he would be continually called on to define his position." The quality of his theological views is amusingly illustrated by the story of the ambassador "of the Greek obedience" who dined with him at Senator Anthony's, and inquired afterwards what his religion was, remarking that he thought he might be of the Orthodox Apostolic Church. A sketch and estimate of Prof. Diman's theology are furnished by Prof. George P. Fisher, which will satisfy the curious in doctrinal matters.

At Brown University Prof. Diman continued

to grow in reputation, and almost from the time of his settlement he had calls to chairs in other colleges and universities, East and West, in some cases including an offer of the presidency; and although he declined these, his sphere of usefulness was enlarged by his acceptance of lectureships in Baltimore and Boston, by contributions to the press and the periodical literature of the day, and by public addresses. He was thus a busy man for nearly a score of years, and he expressed his aim during this period most completely when he wrote briefly to a friend regarding some one of his numerous declinations of higher posts, that he cared "more for scholarship than for position." It is his life as a scholar that these pages contain—an account of his tasks, both at the college and in private with the young ladies whom he taught, and in the different schools at Providence in which he took a humane interest; and with their details are woven some personal impressions of him in his literary club, and brief notices of vacation days and of his second short tour in southern Europe. Of his domestic life very little is said, but his home is described as a pleasant one. Of the development of his mind, the growth of opinion, and of his sentiments and tastes, he apparently left no record except in his published works. He led preëminently a scholar's life; his mind broadened without any crisis of feeling or jar of broken bonds, and his beliefs seem to have had an unimpeded natural growth. That his life-work fell so easily into the department of history, which his intellect found entirely congenial and satisfying, was a piece of excellent fortune.

This memorial of him will be especially pleasing to those whom it will enable better to recall the charm of his personality and to renew their living memories of him. His comparatively early death cut him off from the best years of his usefulness, for his virtues and studies were those that are most fruitful in the last years of a long life.

The Book Fancier; or, The Romance of Book Collecting. By Percy Fitzgerald. Scribner & Welford.

MR. PERCY FITZGERALD has taught us not to expect much from him. After all the fifty or a hundred volumes with which he has weighted the shelves of the second-hand booksellers, he does not yet know how to plan a chapter or to write a sentence. His construction is as careless as his style is slovenly. The best that can be said for him is that he is a lively writer, with a gift for finding good texts for his bookmaking. That he should have written this little volume on book collecting tends to prove that the recent

growth of interest in books as books is even wider than we had supposed. That he should have made as poor a book as this is, shows that his own knowledge of the subject is skin-deep only. It is a sort of scrap-book of snippets of gossip, odds and ends of all kinds tumbled into its pages, helter-skelter and higgledy-piggledy. For example, the chapter on the Elzevirs and Plantins is chiefly taken up with a journalistic description of a modern printing-office, concluding with a list of comic misprints! It is easy enough to see that Mr. Fitzgerald, although he has used his paste and scissors diligently, has no real knowledge of the subject and no firm grasp on it. Any chapter of Mr. Lang's 'Library' or 'Books and Bookmen' is richer and sounder than Mr. Fitzgerald's whole book. We may note especially the obvious absurdities at the top of page 144 and of page 153, and the apparently late discovery of Allibone's 'Dictionary' and of Poole's 'Index.' Of recent French books—which are many and excellent—Mr. Fitzgerald knows little or nothing; he refers to the beloved Bibliophile Jacob as "La Croix" (p. 201), and this is typical of his erudition. He berates the French for their indifference to Molière as evidenced by the few editions of his works!

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

- Alexander, Mrs. By Woman's Wit: A Novel. Henry Holt & Co. \$1.25.
 All is Not Gold that Glistens: A Sketch. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates.
 American Law Review. Vol. xx. St. Louis: Review Publishing Co.
 Bainbridge, Elizabeth G. Schoolroom Games and Exercises. Chicago: The Interstate Publishing Co. 75 cents.
 Beers, Rev. R. W. The Mormon Puzzle and How to Solve It. Funk & Wagnalls. \$1.
 Browne, F. E. Bugle Echoes: A Collection of Poems of the Civil War. Northern and Southern. White, Stokes & Allen. \$2.50.
 Child, F. J. The English and Scottish Popular Ballads. Part iv. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$5.
 Claveau, A. Contre le flot. Boston: Schoenhof.
 Crump, A. The Theory of Stock Exchange Speculation. H. W. Rosenbaum.
 Doriot, Sophie. The Beginner's Book in French. Illustrated. Boston: Ginn & Co. 95 cents.
 Dostoevsky, L'Esprit souterrain. Traduit par E. Halpérine et Ch. Morice. New York: Christern.
 Faguet, E. Etudes littéraires sur le dix-neuvième siècle. Boston: Schoenhof.
 Faguet, E. Les Grands maîtres du xviième siècle. Boston: Schoenhof.
 Foster, D. S. The Romance of the Unexpected. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.
 Gannett-Jones. The Faith that Makes Faithful. Eight Sermons. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co. 50 cents.
 Gunn, Dr. R. A. The Truth about Alcohol. Belford, Clarke & Co.
 Halévy, Ludovic. Princesse. New York: Christern.
 Handbook of School Trustees: A Manual of School Law in the State of New York. Syracuse: C. W. Bardeen.
 Hanson, G. P. The Legend of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co.
 Hellprin, A. The Geographical and Geological Distribution of Animals. D. Appleton & Co.
 Hildeburn, C. R. A Century of Printing: The Issues of the Press in Pennsylvania. 1685-1784. Vol. II. 1764-1784. Philadelphia.
 Kennard, Mrs. E. The Girl in the Brown Habit. Harper & Brothers. 20 cents.
 Littell's Living Age. Fifth Series. Vol. 56. October-December, 1886. Boston: Littell & Co.
 Lodge, H. C. The Works of Alexander Hamilton. Vol. IX. Last. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$5.
 Whitaker, J. Almanac for 1887. London.

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