

ful as these are. It is a library edition for the shelf, not the centre-table—five large and solid octavos, printed (and beautifully printed, by the De Vinne Press) on highly calendered paper, and simply bound in olive-green cloth. It takes its place beside the 'Misérables' issued by the same house. We have need here to speak only of the illustrations, which are of French origin. We cannot vouch for the exact date of their production, but they are as much out of the mode of the present day as the story itself—we were going to say, but Mr. Haggard's 'She' comes to mind. This leaves them, however, in harmony with the text, Romantic both, and both landmarks in the history of popular literature. We can turn readily to better art for household and every-day delight—better design, better wood-engraving. There is a mass of fiction which is more to our taste than Dumas's famous melodrama. All we can say is that they are here well mated, and that those who read English, and not French, have in this edition the comeliest embodiment of them known to us.

*The Life and Times of John Jay*, Secretary of Foreign Affairs under the Confederation, and First Chief Justice of the United States. By William Whitelock. Dodd, Mead & Co.

THE first impression on handling this book is of excessive weight, out of all proportion to its size; and one finds on examination that this is due to very heavy and costly paper—a fair return for the price, doubtless, in the eyes of those persons who cannot conceive that paper can be too heavy, margins too wide, engravings too costly, and the like. In one of the most attractive pages of the 'Autocrat,' Dr. Holmes says: "The teaspoon should be of white silver, solid, but not brutally heavy, as people in the green stage of millionism will have them"—and the rule holds with book paper.

As with the raw material, so with the cookery. This 'Life of Jay' is made big and weighty by the addition of chapters, and parts of chapters, which are good enough as far as the thought and, if we use a little charity, the style goes. But they are pure padding, commonplace and needless. The author says: "It may be thought that the following work is of too historical a nature for a biography; but for a full understanding of the causes which led to the independence of the colonies, and Jay's consequent participation in national affairs, it has proved necessary to go back and trace events prior to the Revolution." And so we proceed to chapter after chapter, one, for instance, on "Taxation," and one on "Tea," which do not add a valuable word to what any school pupil can get in a reasonably good United States history. Really, any person who wishes to read the life of John Jay at all, might be supposed to know something. The author appeals for a precedent to Marshall's 'Washington.' Is he not aware that the later editions of that driest of books discarded two whole volumes of matter on the general subject of colonial history, which had proved effectually the truth of dear old Hesiod's line:

"Fools! who know not how half is more than all"?

There has rarely been a great man that deserved so little to be confounded with "his times" in this manner as John Jay. There was a peculiar personality about him, that deserves to be tracked, if possible, to its most secret springs in private life, as distinct from the sources that were supplying all minds of the day. He had an inborn probity, a genius for virtue, which makes Madison and Adams, much more Franklin and Jefferson, appear defective, and ranks him with Washington,

with Greene, with Wilberforce, with Malesherbes—men who could not do wrong if they tried—those good men, for whom, as St. Paul says, "one might even dare to die." It is now considered the duty of a biographer, in writing the lives of such men as Hamilton, or Erskine, or Nelson, to suppress and even laud their vices. Perhaps "men's charitable speeches" demand so much; let Jay's personal virtue, in which he exceeded such men as Epaminondas and Russell, be set out in detail. For, if a foreigner or a child should ask for the saint of our Revolution—not the hero, or the philosopher, or the orator, or the financier, but the best man who gave his services to his country—what name would rise to our lips sooner than John Jay? He was "Chief Justice" by nature as by office.

It will be inferred from what has been said that we do not think Mr. Whitelock's book is worthy of his subject. "'I have no doubt he means well, my dear,' said Mr. Micawber, 'but I have not yet found that he carries out his meaning in any particular direction whatever.'" He has not the penetration or the grasp of mind adequate for entering into Jay's character and setting it in its right position. His own methods desert him at critical points. It is his object, for instance, to vindicate Jay's character as the author of the famous "Treaty." As this document is much more talked about than known, it would have been an excellent thing to print it in full in an appendix. Mr. Whitelock has so inserted two other state papers of Jay's, valuable, but not by any means so identified with Jay's name as is the treaty. But no treaty do we find in the appendix.

There is another obvious flaw in the author's historical method. He appears to have read English history solely as a supplement to American history, and not for its own sake. This is a very common fault with American historians, even such distinguished ones as Dr. Palfrey and Mr. Bancroft. Their elaborate chapters on events in England are, not merely in their pages but in their minds, only episodes in the grand sequence of American events, like the battle of Preston Pans in 'Waverley.' Yet those men at least have been forced, by the amount of European history they have read, to acquire some independent conception of it, however their intense nationality acts to sink it to a place below its intrinsic importance. But what are we to think of a writer who again and again writes "Townsend" and "Lucerne" for "Townshend" and "Luzerne"? We are sure Mr. Whitelock would be disgusted with "Ticonderago" or "Massachussets"—both very common in English histories; yet he rivals such authors.

To close with praise after censure, let us say that we regard the author's defence of the principles and temper of the Federalists against those of their opponents from 1800 till the present time as excellently done—a piece of manly, spirited, truthful writing; much the best thing in the book.

*Victorian Poets*. By Edmund Clarence Stedman. Revised and extended, by a supplementary chapter, to the fiftieth year of the period under review. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1887.

On the first appearance of Mr. Stedman's 'Victorian Poets' we gladly pointed out its great merit as a hand-book of English poetry during the Victorian period, while we felt called on to demur mildly at its claim as "an essay in philosophical criticism." It now appears in a fourteenth edition, with a supplementary chapter of some seventy pages, extending the range of examination up to the end of the fiftieth year of the Queen's reign. In this Appendix the critical element is necessarily smaller and the hand-

book quality more marked than in the main work; indeed, one examines it with almost a sensation of pity for the labor of eyesight required in making such a catalogue of microscopic authors. Some of them are on a scale so small that the recorder has been unable to ascertain their birthdays, so that they appear in the margin, with melancholy vagueness, as having been born in 18—. But it is far better, after all, to be too comprehensive than the reverse; and the humblest of these bards may, at any moment, appear among us in person, ready and anxious to lecture Americans on any conceivable theme, in words of one syllable. Mr. Stedman, in his additional chapter, takes occasion to restate, with some modifications, his earlier judgment on certain leading poets; especially in the case of Browning, whom he now pronounces the "leader-elect" of the immediate future, as was Tennyson of the time just gone by. He is perhaps a little too sarcastic upon the Browning societies, which in this country have passed their period of effervescence and settled down upon simple and creditable work. One of the most valuable portions of Mr. Stedman's volume is the analytic index, which is reconstructed and made to include both parts of the book—a work which is, after all, so carefully and thoroughly done that it will fill in every library a place that must otherwise have remained empty.

#### BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

- Alden, Mrs. G. R. The Pansy: Stories of Child Life, at Home and Abroad, and of Modern and Ancient History. Illustrated. Boston: D. Lothrop Co. \$1.25.
- Allen, W. B. The Northern Cross; or, Randolph's Last Year at the Boston Latin School. Boston: D. Lothrop Co. \$1.
- Baker, M. The Humorous Speaker. Boston: Lee & Shepard. \$1.
- Bruce, Prof. A. B. The Humiliation of Christ, in its Physical, Ethical, and Official Aspects. 2d ed. A. C. Armstrong & Co. \$2.50.
- Bryce, L. S. Paratise: A Novel. Funk & Wagnalls. 25 cents.
- Carrington, Dean H. Translations from the Poems of Victor Hugo. Thomas Whittaker.
- Coxe, Bishop A. C. Institutes of Christian History. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. \$1.50.
- De Omnibus Rebus. An Old Man's Discursive Ramblings on the Road of Every-Day Life. By the Author of 'Flemish Interiors.' Illustrated. London: John C. Nimmo.
- Dolbear, Prof. A. E. The Art of Projecting: A Manual of Experimentation in Physics, Chemistry, and Natural History with the Porte Lumière and Magic Lantern. Boston: Lee & Shepard. \$1.
- Doran, Dr. Annals of the English Stage, from Betterton to Edmund Kean. Edited and Revised by R. W. Lowe. Illustrated. In 3 vols. London: John C. Nimmo.
- Dumas, A. The Count of Monte-Christo. In 5 vols. Illustrated. George Routledge & Sons. \$15.
- For Her Daily Bread. With preface by Col. Robert G. Ingersoll. Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co. 25 cents.
- Geikie, Rev. C. The Holy Land and the Bible. In 2 vols. James Pot & Co.
- Grove, W. A. Meadow Melodies. Illustrated. Boston: Lee & Shepard. \$1.75.
- Grier, Sarah A. A Few Hints About Cooking, with Remarks on Many Other Subjects. Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co.
- Irving, W. Belles-Lettres Works. Tappan Zee Edition. 12 vols. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$12.
- Jessup, Rev. H. Edward Jessup of West Farms, Westchester County, N. Y., and his Descendants. Cambridge: John Wilson & Son.
- Jones, L. E. The Best Reading: Bibliography of the More Important English and American Publications for the Five Years ending December 7, 1886. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.
- Kiby, E. N. Vocal and Action-Language, Culture and Expression. Boston: Lee & Shepard. \$1.25.
- Lakeman, Mary. Faith's Festivals. Boston: Lee & Shepard. \$1.
- Leander, R. German Fantasies by French Firesides. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.
- Mathews, W. Men, Places, and Things. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co. \$1.50.
- Merry, W. A. Studies in Civil Government. Boston: Silver, Rogers & Co.
- Oden, Ruth. His Little Royal Highness. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$2.
- O'Meara, Kathleen. Narka, the Nihilist. Harper & Brothers.
- O'Reil, M. Friend McDonald and the Land of the Monks. Harper & Brothers. 20 cents.
- Our Little Men and Women: Illustrated Stories and Poems for Youngest Readers. Boston: D. Lothrop Co. \$1.50.
- Proctor, R. A. Easy Lessons in the Differential Calculus. Longmans, Green & Co. 90 cents.
- Proctor, R. A. First Steps in Geometry. Longmans, Green & Co. \$1.25.
- Proctor, R. A. Half Hours with the Stars: A Plain and Easy Guide to the Constellations, specially prepared for American Students. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3.
- Renan, E. Histoire du Peuple d'Israël. Vol. I. Paris: Calmann Lévy; New York: B. Westermann & Co.
- Richardson, Dr. B. W. The Health of Nations: A Review of the Works of Edwin Chadwick. In 2 vols. Longmans, Green & Co.
- Rowbotham, J. F. The Death of Roland: An Epic Poem. London: Trübner & Co.
- Saunders, F. The Story of Some Famous Books. A. C. Armstrong & Co. \$1.25.
- Scott, Sir W. Rob Roy. Boston: Ginn & Co.