

unjust, whether in passages of description, of conversation, or of moral observation, and frequently entirely mistakes the meaning of the text. These assertions may be strengthened by examples. Of the frequent mistakes the following is characteristic: "Lucile avait tort de ne pas exprimer ses craintes," "Lucille was careful not to express her fears." "Dominiquin" is translated "Dominican." The Italian verse,

A pena si può dir: questa fu rosa;

is given as

A pena si suo die fu rosa.

The downrightness and hasty clumsiness of this phrase, "Conscience sometimes becomes morbid under the pressure of sorrow, and one easily accuses oneself of guilt," is no worthy rendering of the delicate harmony in the thoughtful saying: "Quand on souffre, on se persuade aisément que l'on est coupable, et les violents chagrins portent le trouble jusque dans la conscience." When Lord Nelvil says: "La délicatesse avec laquelle vous vous êtes conduit pour monsieur votre oncle, inspire pour vous, M. le comte, la plus profonde estime," it is something very different from "The way you behaved to your uncle, Count, makes me esteem you highly."

This for description: "Ils virent ensemble Pompéa, la ruine la plus curieuse de l'antiquité. À Rome, l'on ne trouve guère que les débris de monuments publics, et ces monuments ne retracent que l'histoire politique des siècles écoulés: mais à Pompéa, c'est la vie privée des anciens qui s'offre à vous telle qu'elle étoit." "They saw Pompeii, the most curious ruins of antiquity. In Rome you simply find relics of antiquity, and in these you just trace the political history of past ages; but at Pompeii the private life of the ancients offers itself to your reflection."

Condemnation must fall on such disrespect shown to a great writer—a writer who gave the most attentive care to the details of this monumental work, and who (in Sainte-Beuve's phrase again) therein "attained to art, to sustained majesty, to harmony."

*Sphinx Locuta Est*: Goethe's Faust und die Resultate einer rationellen Methode der Forschung. Von Ferdinand August Louvier. Berlin: Georg & Fiedler. 2 vols.

Is this treatise a joke? Is it, like the famous book of 'Allegoriowitch Mystifizinski,' a *jeu d'esprit* at the expense of a certain kind of expounders of 'Faust'? So one is certainly tempted to think at first. But the work is in two good-sized octavo volumes, containing together a thousand pages. The paper and printing are excellent, and there is nowhere a suggestion of intentional humor. To make the text must have required years; to see it through the press was, at any rate, no trifling matter; in short, all indications point to the conclusion that we have to do here with a seriously meant contribution to exegetical literature.

Herr Louvier has discovered that 'Faust' is a mine of riddles, the key to which he has, after infinite perplexity, at last found out. He begins his revelations in a very familiar way by reducing the poem to an allegory: *Faust* is the Understanding; *Wagner*, Scholasticism; *Gretchen*, Naiveté; *Mephistopheles*, Egoism; the *Witch*, Anility; the *Poodle*, Negative Proof, and so on. The poem consists, at every point, of three strands skillfully woven together by the poet, but capable of being separated by the cunning reader: first, there is the poetic 'Faust,' in which the characters are what they seem to be and what people in general suppose them to be; then there is the philosophical

'Faust,' in which the same characters stand for abstractions of the mind; and, finally, there is the historical (*culturgeschichtlicher*) 'Faust,' in which they and their language have mysterious reference to important facts of history, as, for example, the Prologue to Freemasonry, the Easter Holiday scene to Grammar, and the Earth-Spirit scene to Swedenborg and the Rosicrucians.

Thus far, perhaps, the revelations of the Sphinx are not so very remarkable. A reader who is at home among the expounders of 'Faust' has heard, if not the same thing, yet the same sort of thing before. But the Sphinx proceeds, and proceeds in a way to arrest the attention of the most phlegmatic passer-by. Not only is Goethe's poem a triplicate tangle as regards its characters and its dramatic economy, but its ordinary language is not what it seems to be. There is a special "Faust language," consisting of symbolical meanings for familiar words; and this symbolism, we learn, is consistently adhered to everywhere. Thus, when the poet says "sun," he always means *knowledge*; "moon" means *the ideal*; "kettle," *the head*; "city," *the brain*; "wood," *stupidity*; "gold," *thought*; and "to spin," *to meditate*. These definitions are taken from a fragmentary "Faust dictionary," found in vol. i, p. 20. The list there given closes with an "et cetera," which implies, we suppose, that the other words in 'Faust' also have their own meanings, which the reader can readily supply for himself. It is only necessary that the Sphinx should put him on the right track.

Thus equipped for his work, Herr Louvier rides boldly into the fray, and what execution he does among the received opinions of the literary public can be neither described nor imagined. The tragedy of *Gretchen* is the destruction of Naiveté by the Speculative Understanding; *Valentine*, *Gretchen's* brother, is, of course, Common Sense, which perishes at the hands of Speculative Understanding, aided by Egoism (*Mephistopheles*). But what of *Gretchen's* continual singing? Ay, there's the rub—that is, there *has been* the rub, says our author. But in the Faust language, "to sing" is *to speak*, and *Gretchen* in her songs is simply bodying forth in words the gradual decadence of the *Meistergesang*. But the beauty of a system is seen always in its applicability to details that are apparently insignificant. It will be recollected that *Gretchen* in frolic hides herself behind the door of a summer-house, where *Faust* afterwards finds her. But now, in the Faust language, all things "wooden" allude to stupidity. So, then: Naiveté takes refuge behind Stupidity, but Understanding recognizes it even in such a hiding-place.

But the *chef d'œuvre* of Louvier's exegesis is to be found in vol. i, p. 165. Readers of Goethe will recall the poodle scene, and the fact that *Mephistopheles*, after his first colloquy with *Faust*, finds himself a prisoner. He explains that he cannot get out of the room on account of the "witch's foot," or pentagram, upon the threshold; which, being imperfectly made and having its outer angle a little open, allowed him to come *in*, though he cannot now get *out*. Hereupon *Faust* congratulates himself upon the lucky accident which has put the devil in his power. After this, *Mephistopheles* causes *Faust* to be lulled to sleep, whereupon he puts oil upon the pentagram and orders one of his minions in the shape of a rat to break the spell by gnawing off the inner point of the pentagram. The hocus-pocus of the scene requires none but historical commentary, and that is sufficiently furnished by any good editor.

But now listen to the Sphinx. This of the

witch's foot, we are assured, is one of the most surprising allegories in the whole drama. It must be something more than a mere geometrical figure—probably the learned word "pentagram" should give the needed clue. Now, "pentagram" means "five letters," and since one corner, and that the outer one, of the figure is "a little open," we have evidently to look for a word of six letters of which the last one is wanting. Further, this word, when found, should, if read forwards, indicate something that *lures Egoism in*, and if read backwards, something that *keeps Egoism from getting away*. The needed word is obviously *Gewin(n)*, which read backwards is *Ni(e) weg*. Here, to be sure, a superfluous "e" appears, but the Sphinx disposes of that in this wise: "'That is a lucky accident,' thus does the poet himself excuse this innocent anagram which is not even orthographically correct." The exposition of the Sphinx continues: The inner corner which is gnawed by the rat is the letter "n" (in "Nie weg"); there remains then *-ie weg* and the "oil" means that the pronunciation of this *-ie* is to be "softened" into *juh*. But *juh weg* passes readily (especially in Berlin) for *geh weg*. Thus is the charm broken and the prohibitive "never away" is softened by oil into the permissive "go away."

"Such screech owls there must also be," observes *Faust* to *Gretchen* in endeavoring to persuade her not to think all too harshly of his friend the devil. It might appear as if this philosophy were too simple to be of great practical use—as if it must be too frail a protection against the varied forms of mental inadequacy which we are all continually discovering in our fellow-passengers on the voyage of life. But really there are emergencies to which no other philosophy seems so well adapted. What other resource, to illustrate, is there for him who in these days endeavors, for whatever reason, to keep abreast of what all kinds of people are printing about Goethe's 'Faust'? There are men of the present epoch who hold that the high-water mark of religious civilization was reached when the Romans built their temple to "all the gods." Others look forward to a temple of all Humanity hereafter. The subject is too broad and deep to be treated just here, but we will at least express the hope in passing, that when the disciples of Comte get ready to build the great Pananthropeion of the future, they may not forget to put in a few comfortable niches for cranks. *Es muss auch solche Käuze geben*.

*A Trip to England*. By Goldwin Smith. Macmillan & Co.

To a vast number of American readers the subject of this little book is one of peculiar interest. Some of them have made the trip, and will be curious to see what Mr. Goldwin Smith may have to say about it; others are looking forward to it with the keen pleasure of anticipation, and will be attracted by the title; while to others the subject is full of deep interest although they have never seen, nor ever expect to see, the land of their ancestors. It is proper to warn those who might buy the book for such reasons that they will in all probability be disappointed. Knowing something of Mr. Goldwin Smith's reputation, they will be prepared to find in it a certain amount of curious doctrine, both social and political—to find him, for instance, abusing "democratic fox-hunting and to demolish the parks of the aristocracy with its "equalizing plough," and in the next breath hoping that the same plough will destroy all the race-courses! They will not be

very much surprised to find him making light of the terrible misery of London on the ground that it has been "exaggerated for purposes of literary sensation"; nor to learn that in his opinion the true *bel vivere* is the terribly uninteresting life of an English country town as described by Miss Mitford. But they will at least expect a very superior kind of guide-book, and even in this they will be disappointed. It is, in fact, surprising that so able a writer should have thought it worth while to take up the subject at all unless he intended to do it full justice, and to say that scant justice is done to it is to state the case mildly. The matter of this book first appeared in the shape of letters to the *Toronto Week*.

*Tenting at Stony Beach.* By Maria Louise Pool. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1888.

This is the second volume of summer travel, in the form of the vacation tour, which the author has given us. Two women and a mastiff camp out on the sands, and naturally have some mild adventures with the natives, and make some observations on their fellows of the boarding-out class. The volume is remarkable for the absence of any appreciation of the aspects of nature. It is scarcely credible that an outdoor book should have so little of the outdoor flavor, in these days when nature, as seen in the quiet of summer, is a lite-

rary cult. The interest of the author is almost wholly in the characters of the neighborhood. These are all oddities, and most of them are too odd to be entirely believed in. The method of characterization is that of Dickens and Miss Phelps. There is a large element of the farcical in the story, and the touch of pathos when the incorrigibly lazy man is struck by lightning, just as he has saved a child from being caught in her boat in the storm, is of the crudest description; such a mixture of the sentimental and the theatrical could only be condoned on the ground that the incident was a fact. The very candidness of the volume goes to show that its basis is reality, but the omission of the softening touches of nature, and of any noble or essentially humane elements whatever, gives a wrong perspective. It is the sort of realism which represents a New England village by its shanties of the ne'er-do-weels, and then tells us that is the "dreary" life of the country people.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

- Allen, Dr. N. *Physical Development; or the Laws Governing the Human System.* Boston: Lee & Shepard.
- Amory, T. C. *Siege of Newport: a Poem.* Cambridge, Mass.
- Barnett, M. J. *Justice a Healing Power.* Boston: H. H. Carter & Knicker. 25 cents.
- Barrett, F. *By Misadventure.* Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co. 25 cents.
- Bonham, J. M. *Industrial Liberty.* G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.75.
- Bowser, Prof. E. A. *Academic Algebra.* D. Van Nostrand.

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The New York report gives Dr. Colt's Farewell Address on leaving New York to take charge of the Ethical Society in London, for the past 60 years known as the "South Place Free Religious Society."  
 A full account of the Economic Conferences between Business Men and Workmen, recently held in Chicago, is included in the Chicago letter.  
 The Philadelphia Society gives an account of the addresses on "The Religion of Ethics," "Reasons for Belief in Ethical Culture," and "Courage in Religion," given at its third anniversary.  
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- Browning, R. *The Blot in the 'Scutcheon, &c. (Poetical Works, Vol. IV.)* Macmillan & Co. \$1.50.
- Clark, E. G. *The Tale of the Shakspeare Epitaph.* Bedford, Clark & Co.
- Clay, Bertha M. *Lady Hutton's Ward.* Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co. 25 cents.
- Emerton, Prof. E. *Introduction to the Study of the Middle Ages (975-1314).* Boston: Ginn & Co. \$1.25.
- Farjeon, B. L. *Doctor Glennie's Daughter.* Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co. 25 cents.
- Franklin, Benjamin. *His Life written by Himself.* Edited for School Use. Boston: Ginn & Co. 50 cents.
- Green, Mrs. J. R. *Henry II.* Macmillan & Co. 60 cents.
- Haggard, H. R. *Maiwa's Revenge.* Longmans, Green & Co. Also, Harper & Bros. 25 cents.
- Hon. Mrs. Vereker. *Chicago: T. S. Denison.*
- Jones, L. A. *Treatise on the Law of Liens.* Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$13.
- Judson, Prof. H. P. *Cesar's Army: a Study of the Military Art of the Romans.* Boston: Ginn & Co. \$1.10.
- Kluge, Prof. F. *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache.* Part V. Strassburg: K. J. Trübner.
- Lowell, J. R. *Political Essays.* Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.50.
- Lowie, J. R. *The Independent in Politics.* G. P. Putnam's Sons. 25 cents.
- McKendrick, Prof. J. G. *General Physiology.* Macmillan & Co. \$4.
- Myers, P. V. N. *The Eastern Nations and Greece. (Ancient History for Colleges and High Schools.)* Boston: Ginn & Co. \$1.50.
- The Maritime Provinces: a Handbook for Travellers.* 6th ed. Boston: Ticknor & Co.
- The Septameron.* Philadelphia: David McKay.
- Todhunter, J. *The Banshee, and Other Poems.* London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.
- Tracking the Truth.* Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co. 25 cents.
- Trumbull, G. *Names and Portraits of Birds which Interest Gunners.* Harper & Bros.
- Two Lunatics.* New York: Theo. Berendsohn. 50 cents.
- Ulbach, L. *For Fifteen Years: a Novel.* D. Appleton & Co. 50 cents.
- Vallery-Radot, H. *Madame de Sévigné.* Paris: Lecène & Oudin; Boston: Schoenhof.

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