LITERARY SUPPLEMENT TO THE NEW AGE

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REVIEWS.

Marie Antoinette. By H. Belloo. ( Methuen. 15s. net.)

Critical biography is fast becoming Mr. Belloo's specialty. First came Danton, then Robespierre, and now comes Marie Antoinette. Apparently Mr. Belloo has observed that the tragedy of Marie may be viewed from two standpoints. The elder Dumas saw it in the somewhat obscured light of national historical romance. Across the pages of his five Marie Antoinette romances there passes the pageant of those highly coloured and very effective events of French history from 1770 to 1793, a world cast of characters of four great Versailles, the flung on the canvas—pictures of royal births, betrothals, marriages, and violent deaths, of intrigue and subterfuge, of comedy and tragedy played by ministers and mistresses, favorites and charmers, Rohans and Du Barrys and De Pompadours and De Mottes and Cagliostros, the whole culminating in the guillotining of royal heads on which the curtain is fittingly rung down. Such isolated and partial treatment of the subject, however fascinating, is not scientific and not always true in fact.

A just estimate of the part played by each important actor upon the stage of world-history can only be obtained by a contemplation of the tendencies and influences of which he or she is the representative. Thus to see Marie Antoinette in her true light is to see her not as the heroine of a florid romance, but as the victim of a tragedy of ambitions. Mr. Belloo has sought to represent her heroine in this interesting light, and if he has not altogether succeeded it is because he has stumbled over his own temperament. He has conceived Marie as the victim of Destiny in the Greek sense, but has revealed her as the victim of a tragedy of ambitions. Mr. Belloo has to forward his unrealisable political ambitions, and are thus enabled to estimate the important part they might play in this direction given favourable circumstances.

According to Mr. Belloo's own testimony Marie was always doing the wrong thing, she was self-willed, wild, and red-headed. She refused to listen to Mirebeau; had she done so things would have been different. She was put into power in France by the Austrian ambassador, who wished to work through her; she had her destiny in the modern sense. He starts by assuring us that "she suffered a fixed destiny against which the will seemed powerless," and her misfortunes and final catastrophe were inevitable, whereas they are seen to be the result of three or four circumstances—the political ambitions of Kaunitz, the antagonistic psychology of Marie, and the death of de Maurepas—a change in any one of which would have altered the whole trend of affairs.

Antionette is an excellent example of his literary power; in this sense it is a delightful achievement, less affected, less rhetorical, and perhaps less illogical than its predecessors. Excellent illustrations, maps, and an entire absence of footnotes add to its value.

Chateaubriand and his Court of Women. By Francis Gribble. (Chapman and Hall. 15s. net.)

One of the manifestations of the entente cordiale would seem to be an interchange of courtesies by means of historical biography. On the one hand you have Frenchmen draping our national heroes in white; on the other, Englishmen returning the compliment. Working to some extent on these lines Mr. Gribble has produced a fairly successful portrait of Chateaubriand as littérateur, politician, andtorch_TEX Start

The Nine Days' Queen. By Richard Davey. (Methuen. 10s. 6d. net.)

"The Nine Days' Queen" is, in a sense, a successor to the "Pageant of London." That book, it will be remembered, consisted of "a series of word-pictures of the principal events that have transpired in the Metropolis." Likewise the volume before us consists of a series of pictures of the principal events leading up to and forming the brief tragedy of Lady Jane Grey. Mr. Davey's avowed object has been "to interest the reader in the tragic story of Lady Jane Grey rather from the personal than the political point of view," and to give "an account of the extraordinary men and women who surrounded her, who used her as a tool for their ambitions." Accordingly, he avoids the usual device of treating her usurpation and its catastrophe as "an isolated phenomenon," and reveals her accession as the central motive of four conspiracies. The statement in Major Hume's introduction that Jane became the victim of Northumberland's ambition not through the prevailing Protestant or Catholic tendencies, but on account of the unpopularity of Northumberland's policy, becomes less true owing to that sensuous epoch preceding the Revolution. Perhaps the most interesting feature about this book is the clear light it throws on women in politics. We see them helping Chateaubriand to forward his unrealisable political ambitions, and are thus enabled to estimate the important part they might play in this direction given favourable circumstances.

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enough while the story lasts to fulfil the great desire that the reader is drawn to follow developments very closely. It does not seem to promise a greatly absorbing interest for the kind of audience which would be sure, unhappily, that just there its circulation will be inconsiderable. Mr. Phipps is very happy in this delineation of coast and harbour life. The book is second only to the sea and the fresh breeze and sea flowers.

The Haven. By Eden Phillpotts. (John Murray. 6s.)

To a writer with an inclination towards reform, one of the keenest pangs of life must arise from the fact that his literary work rarely, if ever, reaches those persons to whom progressive ideas would be most useful. Such a book as "The Haven" might work wonders in the fishing village of Brixham, but we may be sure, unhappily, that just there its circulation will be inconsiderable. Mr. Phipps is very happy in this delineation of coast and harbour life. The book is second only to the sea and the fresh breeze and sea flowers.

Here is a picture: "He brought up seaweed from the olive-green and amber masses ranged by the tide along grey beaches below." And this: "While yet tempered red along the pebble haze of dearth, a thin mist crept over their path where it crossed green meadows in a cromb. Beyond these rose Berry Farm and its elm trees all dark against the ruddy sky." Of such glimpses across the land and the sea there are literally hundreds in "The Haven." It is difficult to choose that which we like best or know fairly.

The story entwines about three living generations of the fisher family named Major. John Major, the elder, is a God-fearing fisherman whose honesty and occasional tesinessness the author draws in admirable detail. Ned, his son, hates the sea, abandons his calling of fisherman and goes to the land. Little Johnny Brokenshire, the son of John Major's daughter, grows old enough while the story lasts to fulfil the great desire of his grandfather's heart and sail in the old boat, the "Jack and Lydia." The main theme of the book is Ned's struggle to please his father in the matter of following the sea. It does not seem to promise a greatly absorbing interest for the kind of audience which would be sure, unhappily, that just there its circulation will be inconsiderable. Mr. Phipps is very happy in this delineation of coast and harbour life. The book is second only to the sea and the fresh breeze and sea flowers.

Nct all of the minor characters are true to life, or are even very skilfully invented. The women are even very skilfully invented. The women are the least acceptable. Neither the weeping lone widow relative of Mr. Peggotty in "David of his grandfather's heart and sail in the old boat, the braces of a very unfaithful but fascinating husband are even very skilfully invented. The women are the least acceptable. Neither the weeping lone widow relative of Mr. Peggotty in "David

Henry played in religion and international politics; yet the dramatic parts are calmly but such as she are surely vanishing even in actual life, and certainly ought to have disappeared long ago from the books of able and idealistic writers. Personally, we think the psychology is all very wrong here. Lydia Major, so honest and independent as a girl, was hardly likely to make the type of wife who endures all indignities for the sake of keeping her home together.

Sam Brokeshire, the handsomc, poaching, rowing, vengeful, and often dishonest husband of Lydia, remains interesting from first to last; and so does his friend the vagabond Socialist, Dick Varwell, a creature of inebriety and wit. If we have never met these types that is our misfortune; they seem very proper and human. Could some of the beautiful women in the wonderful descriptive passages; yet the dramatic parts are calmly and tellingly interwoven. We think Deborah's fatal fall over a cliff not quite convincing, but the tragedy serves to introduce Ned's unexpected, yet most natural, return to the sea which he once hated from the land which once he loved.

Masques and Phases. By Robert Ross. (A. L. Humphreys. 5s. net.)

"Masques and Phases" consists of a dedication and twenty-four short essays on painters, poets, and preachers. With regard to his manner we may let the author speak for himself. Rhetorical March 1. There is not much in my book cast in the form of fiction; criticism cast in the form of parody; and a vein of high seriousness sufficiently obvious, I hope, behind the masques and phases of "The Scarlet Letter." The stage is more serious, "high seriousness" with regard to his matter, especially that on Art, we have some questions to put. Does Mr. Ross really believe that "Whistler was profoundly affected by Rossetti"? and, if so, where does he show this influence? or that "Simeon Solomon" was also profoundly affected? instead of being one of a group of remarkable workers all in a state of movement and all equally influencing each other. Is he quite serious when he speaks of the "unskiful Whistler"? Can he deny that Whistler was not only the essence of skill, but in every way the equal of the "more accomplished Manet"? Where is his authority for saying that the Boer school—meaning, no doubt, the minute Dutch painters, the gay breeze and patination painters who worked in hermetically sealed rooms and seemed to have the power of transforming mobility, or life, to immobility—"were the greatest technicians who ever lived"? Are we to understand that the "skill of Degas is not as just as that of Hals"? Does he believe that "Degas finds beauty only in brasseries, in the vulgar circus and in the ghastly wings of the opera," and not artist-like in everything around him? Is it difficult to believe that the "colour of Solomon is much finer than that of Gustave Moreau"? Again, does he mean seriously that "Sargent is the peer of Gainsborough?" What, too, are we to make of the statement "with one exception never saw finer Wilson Steers; any other Wilson Steers" might well be hung beside the new Turners, when the gulf between ancient and modern art would be almost imperceptible?" That Steer may be favourably compared with the Poussins. Yet we feel that the gulf between ancient and modern art is almost imperceptible; and one not without strange and disputable elements.

The Religion of H. G. Wells. And other Essays. By A. L. Cranford. (Unwin. 3s. 6d. net.)

Perhaps the most interesting essay in this book is the last, "Thoughts on the 'Scarlet Letter,'" "The 'Scarlet Letter' is an excellent book for a churchman to study for the purpose of informing noble principles and at the same time to keep in mind that the world-shattering struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism. It is this religious element that fills the world of historical biography with vindicators and detractors divided on the merits of the actors in and about the House of Tudor at this period. The difficulty of writing fairly and impartially of all these characters is a great one, and is illustrated to some extent by Mr. Davey himself. His prejudiced historical verdict on Henry VIII. needs revising, and the part Henry played in religion and international politics would be much more helpfully written if the book were written on a broader and more convincing line. Upon the whole, Mr. Davey has produced a well-written book of information to which the many curious reader will attach a high value. His practice of encumbering every page with long references to authority is inexcusably bad.
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unsuspecting public, on an exposition of the religious organisation of an over-boomed author, would seem to suggest that the study of Mr. Wells' religion for the purpose of imbibing noble principles is questionable.

Eddyism, miscalled "Christian Science." By Frank Ballard. (Culley. 1s.)

Not long ago we had before us a remarkable book by a physician exposing Christian Science before Science, from the medical standpoint. According to this writer, to let Christian Science have its way and like letting the Plague of the Middle-Ages loose; none one could possibly benefit but the undertaker. Now we have Eddyism exposed before Christian Science, from the determinist standpoint. Says Mr. Ballard, "the treatment of the Bible in the Eddyist Textbook is childish, irrational, and intolerable," and "the adoption of the name Christian Science is nothing less than a shameless impertinence." He then proceeds to prove his case in chapters on "Eddyism not Christian," "Eddyism not Science," "Eddyism contrary to Social Philosophy," and this in his usual pros.-and-cons. manner. Thus it will be seen that the book approaches Hogarth to London of to-day as it were, the madhouse," but becomes a respectable parent and heroic manner! But this is not a book to be flippant or so.

Beggars. By W. H. Davies. (Duckworth. 6s.)

The utter lack of respect shown here for us who are not Beggars makes us feel anxious. Have we, perhaps, to dispose of with the well-known cry of "a vulgar treatment of the Bible in the Eddyist Textbook is a collection of 23 early reviews of Meredith's works of which the chief interest centres in the favourable nature of the notices. W. M. Rossetti and C. Kingsley, reviewing in 1851 the first appearance of the poems, hailed the book as of great importance. George Eliot (1856) writes: "The Shaving of Shagpat is a work of genius, and of poetical genius." The "Times" thus sums up the criticism of the "Rake's Progress": "A book of extraordinary worth, with a hard and narrow view of life. He maintains (9) that "the Rake does not end in that of Hogarth's, and if Mr. Hutton will but study the picture of the "The Rake's Progress," a very crowded canvas.

First Round. By St. John Lucas. (Methuen. 10s. 6d. net.)

If the immoral dogma of self-sacrifice is hurried past, we have only praise for this book. Youth does not sin, nor does it sacrifice itself. We are glad the hero is abruptly concluded so soon as he begins to be so wickedly good as to go back home. There are some delightful people in the story, and their deaths and misfortunes do not convince us a bit. Surely Mr. Duroy never fell down a cliff even in that gloriously heroic manner! But this is not a book to be flippant about. It is good straightforward life for the greater part, and the chapters concerning the boys' school are first-rate. That the witty nephew of Mr. Duroy should finally disclose a streak of the blackguard when faced with a conventional situation and denounce his fair cousin for following her own will is rather biting and pitied in preference to himself, is a thing we deplore but recognise as very likely. The pages are packed with people and yet we remember them all. Dr. Yorke, the bitter and finally sentimental father of the hero, the marchioness, the noble and appealing Miss Mayne, and that bitter confidant of the heroine, are very well done. Topsy, however, a Tribybesque model, we do not believe in— at least, not invariably. But against this trifling minor character we must set the excellent portrayal of Denis Yorke's doings during his first round of life, and the delicate way in which Mr. Lucas suggests the character of Rosalind Duroy, without committing the folly of attempting to dissect her woman's heart.
Six Oxford Thinkers. By Algernon Cecil. (Murray. 7s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Cecil is a person of literary parts who writes like a Tory professor and reasons like a Catholic priest. The author has a chain of ideas "which exercised a profound influence upon the nineteenth century," he exhibits a strong bias in favour of Catholicism throughout. To begin with, he finds nothing startlingly wrong in part the natural pretext of science and healthy scepticism. He accuses him of being a blind and biased sceptic in ascribing the ruin of Rome to Christianity. Yet he proves himself equally blind and biased by ascribing the fall of Rome to Socialism. The author represents Gibbon's error of narrowing the decline of the Roman Empire down to one cause, whereas it was due to many causes; for instance, to corruption, to the revolutionary tactics of that German gladiator Spartacus, to whom Rationale makes one of his royal personages refer, and so forth. He might as well tell us that the fall of the Spanish Empire was due to one cause, to Catholicism, or to the defeat of the Armada, or to the discovery of America by Columbus, or to the prattle of Mansfield's. Mr. Cecil does not mention Gibbon's scepticism, and it is difficult to see why he associates him with Oxford at all, seeing that Gibbon damned that University by declaring that its chief effect on him was to demoralise him. W. E. Headley, however, says that the Catholicism of Newman's "Dream of Gerontius," as interpreted by Elgar, is so different from that of Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis," which in turn widely differs from the Catholic spirit of Berlioz's "L'Enfant de Christ." Third on the list comes Church, who opposes Manning. Possibly it is for this reason that W. E. Headley's story does not call for much comment. We do not say this is, when looked at from the standpoint of evolution, a good thing. On the contrary, we maintain that on the whole it has serious disadvantages. Actually, Socialism aims to re-establish that state of society which is the natural and necessary result of certain privileges, called rights, bestowed as a free gift by society on persons and classes unable of their own effort to win them.

Hence, when Mr. Headley claims that the solution of the modern problem is more individualism, we are with him. When, however, he fails to see that the abolition of unearned income, which is Socialism, is the first step to more individualism, we only shrug our shoulders and put down his book.

The Column of Dust. By Evelyn Underhill. (Methuen and Co. 6s.)

This is a queer tale of a woman who believed a certain invisible "watcher" came out of the spirit world to advise her and incidentally—or is it primarily?—to satisfy an "unenchanted vulgar curiosity." The difficulty about realising such a conception is that the reader is bound to smile under first shock at the creature's command of the English language, though, doubtless, that is meant to understand the whims and thought into the brain of its physical victim. There is an amusing picture of a group of Higher Thought persons, but a totally unreal development when the heroine is thrown out of a pony-trap into an acquaintanceship with a strange mystic of the "real life," under which passion she embraces a stranger, is altogether too bad for a romantic novel. The secret of her parentage is well kept from the reader until the end of the book. The manner of her mother's confession rather stamps a suspicion that the woman who goes hunting to get a child usually does so in a fit of sensuality.

In Unknown Tuscany. By Edward Hutton. (Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Edward Hutton is a temperamental writer, and in this story of the "adventures of his soul among the mountains" (the mountains of unknown Tuscany), he fully realises his responsive personality; he exploits it, if we may use a vulgar expression, for all it is worth. In his preface he frankly tells us what he owes to the historical knowledge of Mr. Heywood; we are not quite convinced that his debt is as great as he thinks. The history outlines of his book is kept in keeping with the softness of the rest of his pictures; he is trying to be picturesque and accurate at the same time, and sometimes the strain is a little too apparent. We liked him better by himself, and with the success of his earlier works to encourage him, we wonder that he thought to add to his reputation by this experiment. We must admit, though, that, in this case, the matter he had to draw upon was scanty, and Tuscany is not an inexhaustible treasure store of legends, pictures, works of art, and stories of great men and deeds like the rest of Italy. The illustrations are delicate and delightful, those of Mr. O. F. M. Ward and the reproductions of the Della Robbias alike. We can imagine travelling very happily through the rosy slopes of Mont Amiata with this beautiful guide-book beside us, for not only should we have our facts, but our impressions ready.

Darwinism and Modern Socialism. By F. W. Headley. (Methuen. 5s. net.)

We regret to inform Mr. Headley that his book is most unsatisfactory. Especially in the discovery made by Huxley in his Romanes lecture of the difference between Natural Right, meaning the right of power, and Acquired Rights, the privileges conferred on the individual by society, Socialists have been content to take their stand on the conception of law underlying present-day society. It is an entire mistake to suppose that Socialism proposes to abrogate Natural Selection for the first time in human society. Human Society was actually constituted on the abrogation of Natural Selection, and is maintained by it throughout its operations. We do not say this is, when looked at from the standpoint of evolution, a good thing. On the contrary, we maintain that on the whole it has serious disadvantages. Actually, Socialism aims to re-establish that state of society which is the natural and necessary result of certain privileges, called rights, bestowed as a free gift by society on persons and classes unable of their own effort to win them.