

Book Notices.

The Last Years of the Nineteenth Century.

By ELIZABETH WORMELEY LATIMER.
With twenty-five full-page portraits.
Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. Toronto:
William Briggs. Pp. 545. Price,
\$2.50.

We have had the pleasure of reviewing in these pages the entire series of Mrs. Latimer's previous volumes on the principal countries of Europe in the nineteenth century. In this book she gathers up the threads of that narrative during its last decade. It is more difficult to obtain a record of that decade than of any other in the century. Its history is still scattered throughout the year-books, magazines, newspapers and contemporary volumes.

This volume we think indispensable for ready reference to the stirring events of recent years. Mrs. Latimer exhibits remarkable literary skill, her books are not merely a dry record of fact, but abound in those anecdotes, incidents and gossip which give personal interest to contemporary history. She traces the somewhat turbulent record of France; the remarkable progress of Russia, the Peace Congress, the Armenian and Crete and Balkan conflicts and tragedies; the Diamond Jubilee and expansion of England in India, in the Soudan, in South Africa; and traces the recent record of Italy, Austria, Hungary and Spain.

This is one of the few books in which American readers will find the truth about the Boer war. Mrs. Latimer gives the best *résumé* we have seen of this war. She asks if Mr. Kruger, with all his Bible reading, ever read the verse "He swear-eth to his neighbour and disappointeth him not, even though it were to his own hindrance." England took over the Transvaal when it owed a quarter of a million pounds and had only 12s. 6d. in its treasury, and spent six million pounds in subduing the Kaffirs and Zulus. Mr. Kruger invited the English to settle in the Transvaal and promised them equal rights with the Dutch. He was fraudulently elected when opposed by Joubert. In 1892 he told the Uitlanders, "Tell your people that I shall never give them anything. I shall never change my policy. And now let the storm burst." In 1894 the Volksraad received a petition for the redress of grievances signed by thirty-two thousand

Uitlanders. It replied that "if the signers wanted the franchise they must fight for it." Though individual Boers have been kindly, "the Boer Government has paid no respect to promises, and its high officials who held office under Mr. Kruger are not only treacherous, but cruel." He broke faith with the surrendered Jameson Raiders. "I have sometimes to punish my dogs," he said, "some of them are good and lick my boots, others get away and snarl at me." Mr. Edgar, an Uitlander, was shot down by a Boer policeman in his own house, and the murderer received but slight punishment. Kruger imported rifles enough to arm every Dutchman in Africa; the Uitlanders were forbidden to import. The ignorance and conceit of the people was colossal. A rural community forwarded a resolution to the Government before the war broke out, urging an immediate invasion of England. There were seventeen different trusts or monopolies on the necessities of life. Many leading Boers sent their families to Cape Town that they might be in safety during the war.

The "slimness" of the Boers was notorious. Professing to surrender their arms they hid them in wells, in the thatch, in the ground, and recklessly broke their parole. They fed the people on lies. The "Pretoria Volkstein" announced that Lord Kitchener and Methuen were wounded, Lord Roberts a prisoner, and "the rest of the English army have committed suicide." Kruger was the richest man in the Transvaal and the most corrupt. This writer blames not the duped and ignorant Boers, but their truculent and treacherous leaders. She confidently anticipates that the result of the war will be "in the interest of liberty, justice and civilization throughout South Africa, including the Transvaal itself."

The Private Memoirs of Madame Roland. Edited, with an Introduction, by EDWARD GILPIN JOHNSON. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 381. Price, \$1.50.

A tragic pathos is given to these leaves from the life of the French martyr to liberty from the fact that they were written within five months of her death by the guillotine. She is still the