

A BOY'S BOOKS, THEN AND NOW—VII.

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(Continued from page 210.)

(c.) *Huet.*

THE chief labour, however, practically, of subjecting the Dauphin to verbal drill, according to the educational ideas of the time, fell to the lot of Peter Daniel Huet, or Huetius as his name usually appears in Latin. Huet was the most erudite scholar of the day, devoted to study and books from his infancy. "Almost before I was weaned," he says in his autobiography, "I felt envious of those whom I saw employed in reading." But though thus bookish from his youth, "he mingled," we are told, "the accomplishments of a gentleman with the literature of a scholar. He visited the polite, was very neat in his dress and studious of pleasing; if he did not excel in dancing," his biographer says, "he had few equals among his acquaintance in running, leaping, swimming, riding and fencing." In his *Pensées Diverses*, or Huetiana, as the book is commonly styled, he shows that he was a man of the widest knowledge, and very profound thought. I note at one place in his *Pensées* a mention made of Canada, and a fact in its Flora which, as here put, will be probably new to us. "In that country," he says, "the wood of the trees is so impregnated with salt that the lye made from their ashes is used in laundry operations. The virgin lands of that country," he adds, "also yield a hundred-fold." Huet conducted the classical studies of the Dauphin from 1670 to 1680. He had been previously invited to superintend

the education of the young king of Sweden, Charles Gustavus, successor to Christina; and Christina herself tried to lure him to her side when resident in Rome after her abdication; but having had some experience of Christina during a visit to Stockholm in 1652 in company with his friend Bochart, he declined both offers. Montausier and Bossuet committed to him the general editorship of the Delphin Classics. He selected the forty scholars who were respectively to annotate the forty authors included in the scheme; and he gives hints of the difficulty which he had in finding suitable men. He did not undertake the annotation of any author himself; but he completed what M. Faye, one of the sub-editors, dying, had left unfinished, on the *Astronomica* of Manilius; and Weber, in the Preface to his *Corpus Poetarum Latinarum*, observes that Huet's notes are the only valuable part of the Delphin edition of Manilius; Weber at the same time takes exception to Huet's treatment of Scaliger. He thus writes: "Ed. Fayi, in us. Delphini, Paris. 1679, 4to, nullius per se usûs, nisi quod Danielis Huetii præclaras animadverss, eas tamen plenas iniquæ in Scaligerum obstrictationis, additas habet." (In the Delphin series, it is to be observed that Lucan was not included. The *Pharsalia* of that poet is an invective against tyranny and a panegyric of liberty, and contains sentiments not in harmony with Louis XIV.'s ideas. It is singular, however, that Lucan