

with some adverse criticism, more or less deserved. An English reviewer has observed that Anthony Trollope knows how to write a novel only too well. He is an established favourite, especially in the boudoir, because he seems to have found the way to the universal heart of feminine humanity, mastered its mystery, and made himself acquainted with its likes and longings. Mr. Wilkie Collins has gone off into *bizarrie* in character and plot, and there is no other male novelist remaining of the old school who can hold his own with Mr. Trollope. Mr. Black, Mr. Blackmore, and a few others who might be named, are of the rising type—a new school in fact, of which George Eliot is the master, as indeed she is like to be of good novel and romance writing for many years to come. Anthony Trollope has lost none of his skill; there are no traces of artistic decadence in the work before us, but he seems to have abandoned those fields in which we used to delight in his company in former years. The cathedral close and cloisters, the freshness of the country parsonage, have disappeared to make way for the vulgarities of the stock exchange, and the gorgeous show of the *parvenu* plutocracy. The cunning of the character painter is unimpaired; but there is an evident straining after incident in ephemeral topics of interest. The Foreign Loans Committee report has been utilized by novelists, as the Whitechapel murder by the reporters, and this is an obvious mark of weakness. Mr. Grenville Murray, in the *Boudoir Cabal*, and Mr. Trollope in the latest of his novels, both snatch at it with all the zest of a penny-a-liner. The *Saturday Review* attacked both fictions, but not, we think, on strong ground. The authors, in the Rev. Nonus Nines of the one, and Mr. Alf of the other, trod, too sharply on the cynic's toes, and that would apparently account for his unwonted savagery. The character of Lady Carbury has been fastened upon as untrue to life, by an American critic of all others. He cannot believe that a titled lady could resort to her pen for support, much less seek to fill her depleted purse by unworthy angling for editorial support. It is always unwise in a foreigner to challenge the portraiture of a writer like Trollope. In his types he is never mistaken and should never be distrusted, unless upon incontrovertible proofs. Lady Carburys exist in English society, and it is to the credit of our novelist that he has contrived to soften the harshness of her character in that mysterious solvent, a mother's unselfish love of a worthless son. Mrs. Hurtle, a Western American, is perhaps the actor in the drama most offensive to the Boston critic; yet with Laura Fair in our recollection, it is hard to see why she should be called unnatural. It is no doubt to be regretted that novelists will insist upon selecting *outré* types of character like Mrs. Hurtle or Fiske, in dealing with America. Mr.

Trollope certainly must have met in the United States many a noble girl and many a fresh and worthy type of womanhood about whom he might have thrown a glow of interest and sympathy. Travelling, as he did, through the large cities and along well-traversed highways, he may have missed the worthy side of home life in America. Still he has managed to enlist the reader on Mrs. Hurtle's side in the end, and there is not much to complain of. Mr. Melmotte, we suppose, may stand for a Baron Grant, who comes to grief at last. Roger Carbury is a very honourable squire, but we should say rather a disagreeable person to live with, and the Longstaffes are not "nice," though strictly conventional. Hetta Carbury is a brisk little heroine, of course pretty and lovable, with a dash of the cat in her, as all heroines must be to save them from insipidity. Paul Montagu would no doubt make her a good husband; there is little to be said on behalf of his head, whatever we think of his heart. We only wish poor Marie Melmotte had been tethered to a better fate, but we cannot have everything mundane our own way, even in novels. The plot the reader must discover for him self or herself. As we have already observed the craft of the workman is as deft as ever, and the book as a whole is as interesting as it is pure and unobjectionable in tone throughout.

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EARTH TO EARTH; a Plea for a change of the system in our Burial of the Dead. By Francis Seymour Haden, F.R.C.S. London: Macmillan & Co. 1875.

ALTHOUGH the revival of cremation seems to have gained some footing in South Germany and Italy, there is no likelihood of its general or permanent success in Christendom. Appeals to ancient precedents will avail nothing as opposed to the general repugnance of modern society to the system. Its advocates have endeavoured to raise their hobby to the dignity of a fine art. They are fond of dilating upon the inoffensiveness of the crematory process, the thoroughness with which it performs its work, and the satisfaction it will be to sorrowing relatives to have the ashes of their deceased friends elaborately inurned as household treasures—comely additions in fact to our drawing-room furniture. All their efforts to convince will prove abortive; men will insist upon burying and being buried, and the only question is whether the present system of burial may not be so far improved upon, as to combine some regard for sanitary laws with a reasonable respect for prevailing opinions on the subject.

Mr. Seymour Haden, in this *brochure*, which is a reprint of three letters addressed to the *Times*, is opposed to cremation as costly, troublesome, and unacceptable. The writer remarks that there are 3,000 people dying in London