

or to Mr. James Bryce. No, he discusses—as the Table of Contents shows us—"Society," "A Summer City"—Newport, namely, "Women and Young Girls," "American Pleasures." More than one critic has called these superficialities. They may be; compared to the working of a written constitution and the unification, or attempted unification, of a huge and motley conglomeration of peoples under one federal government no doubt they are. But it altogether depends upon the point of view: to the therapist no doubt, on the look out merely for "active principles" which he extracts and labels as drugs, the colours and perfumes of a bud count for little; to the botanist and floriculturist, however, these are much; and why an observer should be belittled because he confines his attention to the blossom, and leaves to others the root, is not altogether apparent. Perhaps some day we shall have a globe-trotter who will have the ability to study both root and flower and shall be able to show us how and why the one is a necessary product of the other. But he will be a wonder indeed. Till he comes let us be thankful that we can learn something of the one through such eyes as those of Mr. Bryce and of the other through those of M. Bourget.

Mr. "Mark Twain," in his (no doubt) well-known article on M. Bourget's book in the *Forum*, jocosely likened the writer to an entomologist studying under a magnifying glass a number of . . . of . . . yes, I will bring myself to use his word . . . "bugs." The simile was not perhaps completely complimentary to Mr. Clemens' compatriots—at least so it does not sound to English ears; and wherein lay the intended irony of the remark it is not quite easy to see. But in truth in the whole article the jocosity was rather elephantine and the seriousness rather animalcular. What was intended was, presumably, the enunciation of the critic's opinion of the immensity of the dissimilarity between the observer and the observed, the entomologist and the . . . the . . . the insects, and the consequent inability of the former to understand, on a cursory glance, the latter. But surely in that very dissimilarity lay the interest of M. Bourget's observations. Throngs go to hear "Max O'Rell" lecture on America; would as many go to hear Mr. Chauncey Depew on the same topic? It is precisely because Dickens, de Tocqueville, Matthew Arnold, Herbert Spencer, the late Chief Justice Coleridge, Mr. Bryce, and M. Paul Bourget observe and comment on something wholly new to them that the expressed opinions of these have been so widely read and remembered. As to the cursoriness, first impressions are keen, and, with intellects like that of the Academician, are, so far as they go, likely to be accurate. To generalize and seek for causes after only cursory glances and first impressions no doubt is dangerous; but the entomologist in this instance is not given to over-much generalization. He says himself, "The writer must make use of his general impressions in the way that the painter utilizes the walls of his studio. He hangs upon them the studies which at once hide and are sustained by them. . . . I have done my best to forget my theories" (pp. 7, 8).

What style these Frenchmen have! Its beauty is discernible even through the translation. What a vocabulary! What delicate shades of meaning! What allusiveness! What suggestiveness! The most polished English seems rough and rugged beside this smooth and even diction. Nevertheless, perhaps, while the one gains in uniformity the other gains in strength. The one reminds us of a soft alluvial deposit, the other of a rocky igneous upheaval. At bottom, no doubt, the character of the language itself is the cause of much of the dissimilarity.

How a Frenchman looks at America and things American I have left myself no room to say. And, indeed, in the case of a Frenchman like M. Paul Bourget, it would be no easy thing to say. His book must be read: it is as entertaining as interesting. The delicacy of his irony alone is worth considering. When he speaks of the American "Beauty" he says:

"The most artless of these young-girl types, and to my mind the most touching, . . . is the *Beauty*. . . . She must be very tall, very well formed, the lines of her face and figure must lend themselves to that sort of reproduction of which the newspapers and their readers are so fond. She must also know how to dress with magnificence, which here is inseparable from elegance. Once recognized, though she may not be more than twenty years old, she enters upon a sort of official, almost a civic, existence. . . . She is as necessary a part of every grand dinner and ball as the roses at a dollar a piece and the champagne *brut*. . . . She is,

in fact, a social actress and a champion of her order, like a master of billiards or chess. Let us be more ambitious—like a pugilist, like Jim Corbett, the Californian!" (pp. 86, 87).

His description of a game of football is, perhaps, what might be expected of a Frenchman:

"The roughness with which they seize the bearer of the ball is impossible to imagine without having witnessed it. He is grasped by the middle of the body, by the head, by the legs, by the feet. He rolls over and his assailants with him, and as they fight for the ball and the two sides come to the rescue, it becomes a heap of twenty-two bodies tumbling on top of one another, like an inextricable knot of serpents with human heads. This heap writhes on the ground and tugs at itself. One sees faces, hair, backs, or legs appearing in a monstrous and agitated *mêlée*. Then this murderous knot unravels itself, and the ball, thrown by the most agile, bounds away and is again followed with the same fury. It continually happens that, after one of those frenzied entanglements, one of the combatants remains on the field motionless, incapable of rising, so much has he been hit, pressed, crushed, thumped." (pp. 330, 331)

Whatever Mr. "Mark Twain" may say, it is not every day that such a Frenchman as M. Bourget comes over to the United States with the express purpose of recording his impressions. When he does, they are worth reading.

ARNOLD HAULTAIN.

A Trip to England.*

THESE pages are "an expansion of a lecture delivered to friends." They commence by presenting a panorama on a small scale of the successive epochs of English history as illustrated by English monuments and remains of ancient buildings. Then England as she exists to-day is sketched from the various points of view which strike a visitor. Her institutions, the Throne, the Church, the Army, the Town Volunteer's and Country Life, the Black Country, are all in turn described. The transition from one subject to another is nicely and gracefully managed. A change is commencing to come over the spirit of England's dream. Prof. Goldwin Smith has noticed the prominent features of the various innovations. The opinions of a University man who has seen much of the world and learned much by observation, and who revisits his native land after the absence of years cannot but be of value. There is a current of somewhat sad reminiscence in many of the pages. Dr. Goldwin Smith cannot be said to be altogether a *laudator temporis acti*, but it is quite evident that many of the changes introduced in these present times do not harmonize with his preferences. With some of his regrets we thoroughly sympathize. But, thank God, the heart of England is still sound. The last election showed what she can do when she is aroused. The English people are very patient, very slow and submit to a good deal, but once stir them up and they are like their own bull-dogs—they never let go.

One curious sentence occurs on Dr. Goldwin Smith's second page: "It is an advantage which Canadians have over Americans that they have not broken with their history and cast off the influences, at once exalting and sobering which the record of a long and grand foretime exerts upon the mind of a community." *Oh si sic semper*, Dr. Goldwin Smith! When you write thus why do you use every effort to cause us to lose this leavening element in our Constitution? Do you not think we know the truth of this statement? We know it well. This sentence contains the kernel of the objection which Canadians have to becoming Americans. If you then see so plainly the better path why seek to turn us from it?

It gives us great pleasure to recommend this sketch of a visit to England. Those who have been there will recognize many features which have struck them. Englishmen living on this side of the ocean will have their own recollections revived. Those who have not visited England will find much to correspond with their reading and will receive suggestions which will help them to understand the trend of modern English politics and social life.

Vision of Thyra; or The Gift of the Hills. By Iris. (Boston: Arena Publishing Company, Copley Square. 1895.) —Those who are able to endure the later strains of Walt Whitman, or the frantic lines of Lola Montez, or the more frenzied Californian exuberance of Joaquin Miller, may be able to find some pleasure in this *Vision*. To us it is a tale told by an "idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

*"A Trip to England." By Goldwin Smith, D.C.L. New York and London: Macmillan & Co. Toronto: Copp, Clark Co., Ltd.