

BOOK REVIEWS.

VIEWS AND INTERVIEWS ON JOURNALISM.
 Edited by Charles F. Wingate. New York :
 T. B. Patterson. 1875.

This is a very provoking book in many respects. It contains a good deal of interesting information respecting American journalism, but this is spread over so large a space, that when the reader has waded through its three hundred and sixty pages, the first reflection which will occur to him almost inevitably will be that his time has been spent upon a labour which makes him no adequate return. Interviewing is itself an excrescence in modern journalism; it is annoying to those who are its subjects, and eminently unsatisfactory to the public. When, however, a large volume, like the one before us, is made up of "interviews," the task of its perusal is one that few would undergo, except in the execution of their duty. If Mr. Wingate had given us some account of the newspaper people and a condensed statement of their views on the present needs and future prospects of journalism in America, he might have produced a readable volume within reasonable compass. As it is we have the opinions of no less than twenty-seven writers spun out in a merciless fashion, helter-skelter, without system and without any attempt to frame a general *consensus*, or even to classify the conflicting views, and strike a balance between them. That the opinions of editors such as Whitelaw Reid, Dana, Halstead, Marble, Curtis, and others, are worth knowing will be readily admitted; but there is no justification for presenting them in so chaotic a form as to leave no settled impression on the mind. The same may be said also of the reiteration again and again with a little variation in phrase of the same opinion. Moreover a great deal of mere padding in the shape of newspaper extracts—such as the pithy platitudes of Theodore Tilton about virtue and vice—might have been excluded with advantage. The modern art of book-making seems, to us a great nuisance, where it is not an actual fraud upon the time and pockets of the public.

Having said thus much in dispraise of Mr. Wingate's book, it is only fair to say it contains many valuable hints for the elevation of newspaper journalism, offered by men of shrewdness and experience. We can only refer here to two points, on one of which there seems to be con-

siderable difference, whilst on the other there is tolerable unanimity. The arguments for and against anonymous journalism are presented in various lights, though with little novelty or originality. It would perhaps have been difficult to say anything here on so well-worn a subject. The balance of opinion is clearly in favour of the existing system, and it appears certain that it will continue to obtain both in England and America. The other question is one of great moment, since upon its decision will depend the position of the newspaper press in future. Almost all writers who express an opinion in this volume are clearly convinced that the days of party journalism are numbered. They point to the fact, that as popular intelligence advances, readers are losing faith in the utterances of strictly party organs. The *Herald*, the *Tribune*, and all the ablest papers in the West and South have espoused the independent system, and adhere to it with more or less consistency. Partyism, there as well as here, has fallen into disrepute, and the newspaper press which clings to it through thick and thin has suffered in public estimation to an astonishing degree. There can be no doubt that the same is true of Canada, though we have not yet gone so far on the road to conscientious and independent expression of opinion as our neighbours. On this head there is no disagreement amongst the best American editors. They are all convinced that if the daily journal is to hold its own, it must cut itself adrift from party connections, and eschew entangling alliances with sinister interests of all sorts. There are many other topics touched upon, such as the proper price of the daily paper, the "dead-head" system, the true position of the advertiser, the insertion of special notices in the reading columns, &c.—all of them treated with sound and practical good sense.

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW. By Anthony Trollope. New York : Harper and Brothers. 1875.

If this novel had been the work of a new and unknown author, it would probably have been received with general applause. Coming from the workshop of a popular artificer, it has met