

anæsthetics in obstetrics is apparently claimed for America, though really due to the late Sir J. Y. Simpson, of Scotland. In giving the history of chemical discoveries and theories, those of Dalton and Black are not once alluded to, though several less important ones are mentioned. In treating of mediæval science, scholasticism, and the schoolmen, Roger Bacon, the greatest of them all, is never referred to; and in noticing the doctrine of Evolution there is a similar omission of the name of Herbert Spencer. Worst of all, however, is the treatment to which Lord Bacon is subjected. The remarks about him on p. 233 are nearly as untrue, as unjust, and as offensive as are those in regard to Socrates in "The Intellectual Development of Europe."

It must now be evident that Dr. Draper's work has numerous and grave defects, which preclude it from being an adequate exposition of the great subject of which it treats. At the same time we gladly admit, that, as a popular introduction, it has many and striking merits, and will well repay a careful perusal. As such we can cordially recommend it to our readers.

THE MAID OF FLORENCE; or, A Woman's Vengeance. A Tragedy in Five Acts. With an Historical Preface. London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Low and Searle. Toronto: Copp, Clark, and Co.

As this drama bears upon its title-page the name of a Canadian as well as an English publisher, we may suppose that Canada has a special interest in the writer. And we shall be glad if such is the case, for the work is one which undoubtedly shows talent, though talent in need of somewhat more careful cultivation.

Tragedy has not of late been in a flourishing condition. Perhaps it belongs especially to an age like that of Shakespeare, in which the general action of the world was more dramatic than it is at present, the points of character more salient, the manifestation of passion more undisguised, costume more picturesque, than they are at present, and in which, there being no newspapers, and little fiction except the obsolete romances of chivalry, the stage was the only mirror of life to the great mass of an active-minded and curious people. Nearly the same conditions existed during the palmy days of dramatic art at Athens. In our days the drama has two formidable rivals on different sides—the novel and the opera. Novels, which now come out in England at the rate of two in three days, absorb much of the interest formerly felt in the stage. The opera offers to an age caring for sensations, the excitement of music and spectacle, while many of the singers are really also excellent actors and actresses. Jenny Lind was a first-rate actress in parts that suited her, such as the *Figlia del Re*, and so is Titiens in such parts as *Lurdia Borgia*. The drama itself is fain to borrow the aid of spectacle, and the scene-painter has become as important as the poet. Tragedy, however, still keeps its place as a form of poetry, like the epic, that also belongs in its perfection to an age different

from the present; and perhaps if the passion for excitement should ever subside, if art of the higher kind should recover its ascendancy, and we should begin again to pay attention to our theatres as places of intellectual amusement and schools of national character, the tragic poet may have his own again.

Florence, whose history is full of action at once picturesque, passionate, and serious, was well selected as the scene of the drama, and both the play itself and the historical preface afford proof that the subject was studied with care and intelligence by the composer. The plot is in perfect keeping with the tenor of Florentine annals. Colonna, a Roman noble, but a leader of mercenaries, is taken into the service of Florence, hard pressed in war with Sienna, and gives her the victory over her enemy. Bianca, daughter of one of the chief men in Florence, falls in love with him and he with her. By her influence he is made *Podesta* or Dictator. But in his elevation, ambition gets the better of love in his heart; he discards Bianca and accepts the hand of a daughter of Visconte, tyrant of Milan. Bianca, to avenge herself, gets up a counter-revolution in which Colonna perishes, while Bianca, who still loves him, takes the poison which she had been tempted, but had refused, to use against his life.

The action of the play is vigorous; character, though not very deep or complex, is well portrayed; the language is often very good, and we could pick out not a few pregnant and nervous lines. On the whole there is considerable promise of excellence. It is particularly difficult to give a specimen of a drama; but we will venture on an extract from the scene in which Ursula, a professed she-doctor and secretly a poisoner, who is also a spy, tempts Bianca to employ poison as the instrument of her revenge:

“BIAN. Leave us, Theresa. I would now consult

Your skillful friend alone. [Exit THERESA.]

URSU. Well said, my lady!

The priest is the confessor to the soul;

The doctor, to the body. You must hide

No jot of the truth from either.

BIAN. Tell you all!

URSU. My art is vain, unless I know the truth. Where ail you, madam?

BIAN. Where?—My body ails me—

Because my mind is racked— [Touches her brow.]

URSU. The body's ills

Harrass the mind. The mind's, far more the body—

Speak freely. You can trust me. Lies the root

Of your disease in nature's noblest part?

Whence comes your grief?

BIAN. Pardon me, good mother—

Dark, potent secrets doubtless you command.

Say first, whence comes your skill?

URSU. My father was a skillful alchymist,  
And wondrous knowledge oft repaid his toil.  
For, while the dreaming world around him slept,  
His wakeful nights were spent in torturing nature;  
Each limb and organ questioned on the rack,  
To yield their secrets to him.—Happier truths,  
Blessings to man, nature perverse would hide.  
If God made this world, surely Satan marred it!  
For dark and deadly secrets, hell-devised,  
Revealed to him, he dreaded to make known,  
Lest wicked men might use them. 'Twas this fear  
Whitened his head, wasted his frame, while yet