

the day has surpassed Mr. Black in dealing with the charming female eccentric. A girl who can be managed by a few who understand her, but who puzzles the world generally, has a peculiar fascination for him, and Madcap Violet is as well analysed, and her form as clearly cut, as the daughter of Heth herself. We think, however, Violet the girl is much better and more carefully pictured for us than Violet the woman, and, perhaps because of this, the conclusion bears the appearance of being done to order, and not arriving naturally. No more charming picture of a beautiful wilful girl than Violet at Miss Wains' School need be desired. But we believe Mr. Black is at fault in the development of her character, for the common experience is that such wilful girls become very sensible women. The character of Drummond is true to life, but George Miller is hardly well imagined. The novel is, notwithstanding some padding, the work of a true artist, and the interest in the fate of Violet is well sustained. The trip to the Highlands is an episode which Mr. Black could not do other than manage felicitously, his talents finding their wings strongest in air which sweeps over heather, or which sports with the spray of rock-beating waves.

The second edition of the Clerical Guide and Churchwardens' Directory* shows no falling off in careful editing, and embraces much new matter. It contains a brief but interesting sketch of the History of the Anglican Church in the Dominion. The Synod Reports are full of useful information, and the same remark applies to the Parish Guide. This second edition is a clear improvement on the first, and deserves equal if not greater success.

Musical

It may safely be questioned if, with all the advantages of the present day with regard to musical matters, our tastes and achievements in that direction have improved very much. We shrink from looking too closely into the subject, for the phrase "the present day" is in itself so ambiguous, so contradictory, so hackneyed, that at the very outset we would probably find ourselves out of our depth. Besides, we like to think, in common with other thinkers, that this really is an age of progress, of equality, of cheap tuition and cheaper editions. However, without inspecting the matter too closely, a few remarks concerning the piano, that instrument which, as somebody says of a Scotchman, is probably to be found at the North Pole, should we ever reach there, may not be out of place. We would draw attention to one or two difficulties which beset the amateur pianist—by which term we denote

* *The Clerical Guide and Churchwardens' Directory*, Edited by C. V. FORSTER BLISS. Ottawa: J. Durie & Son, 1877.