

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

TOLD AFTER SUPPER. By Jerome K. Jerome. Illustrated. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

The introductory chapter of this ghostly book is as clever and amusing as any part of it. It has "96 or 97" delightful illustrations by Kenneth M. Skeaping, which, added to the pretty print and good paper, make it very attractive. It conveys a "moral," namely, that those who would sleep in peace, untormented by ghosts, should avoid such suppers as that described by Mr. Jerome. The cool courage of the ghost-seers is much to be admired, but *not* imitated, as it appears to be frequently of the character commonly called "Dutch." The chapter containing "a personal explanation" is good.

SARDIA: A Story of Love. By Cora Linn Daniels. Price 50 cents. Boston: Lee and Sheppard. 1891.

When the late Mr. Dickens read "Adam Bede," he exclaimed: "If the writer of that book is not a woman, I am one!" Mr. Dickens, in this matter, saw more clearly than most. It was not every one who could so easily find out the sex of George Eliot. There is no such difficulty in the present case. "Sardia" is, beyond all doubt, a woman's work; and it partakes of the subjective, psychological tendency of many modern novels. For all that, it is not at all a bad story. Some parts of it seem to us a little improbable; but, then, truth is stranger than fiction. Some of the incidents are a little disagreeable, and some are not so much so as we expected them to be. In spite of some drawbacks, however, we read the story with interest from beginning to end.

FRANZ DELITZSCH: A Memorial Tribute. By Dr. S. I. Curtiss. Price 3s. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark; Toronto: McAinsh. 1891.

It was an excellent idea on the part of Dr. Curtiss, of Chicago, to give us this short memoir of his honoured friend, the late Dr. Delitzsch, whilst we are waiting for the more complete biography which will probably not appear for a year or two. No man knew better how to adjust the claims of orthodoxy and science than Delitzsch did, and the record of his literary life may be set before Biblical students of all ages as an example which they would do well to imitate. The outlines of the great Hebraist's life are here given with care and accuracy; and the author has furnished us with an almost complete list of his writings. Every admirer of Delitzsch—that is to say, every careful student of his writings—will welcome this seasonable publication.

HOW TO READ ISAIAH. By Buchanan Blake, B.D. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark; Toronto: McAinsh. 1891.

Every one, unless it be those who know the historical books of the Old Testament almost by heart, must be familiar with the difficulties which beset the student of the writings of the Prophets. Mr. Blake has done well, therefore, in making an attempt to arrange the greater part of the Prophecies of Isaiah in chronological order, introducing at the proper places those passages of the history which are needed to explain the allusions in the prophetic writings. The portion attributed to the Great Unknown is not given. The work has been done with care and success, and will certainly be found helpful. Considering the lofty tone in which the author speaks of the revisers of the Old Testament version, we think his own translations might have been better. In numerous passages they are inferior both to the Authorized and the Revised Versions.

BORIS LENSKY: Translated from the German of Ossip Schubin. Price 50 cents. New York: Worthington and Company. 1891.

Ossip Schubin, as we are informed, is the *nom de guerre* of a German lady novelist, who is taking in her own country somewhat the same place which was taken by George Sand in France. There is no denying the literary power displayed in this book, but we must warn our readers that its tone is that of a Russian or French novel much more than that which we expect from a German or English novelist. The character of the hero, a Russian violinist, is conceived with great insight and power, and the working out of his history is psychologically not improbable; but many of the incidents are painful. The book is very prettily got up, paper, type and photogravures all being excellent. We wish we could give the same praise to the translation. But this is impossible. To refer to "the difficultly vanquished sadness of the past night" is not to write English, and much of the translation is clearly unidiomatic, whilst some is positively inaccurate.

TALKS WITH ATHENIAN YOUTHS. Price \$1.00. New York: C. Scribner's Sons. 1891.

This pretty volume belongs to an admirable series intended to make English readers familiar with the mind and teaching of Socrates and Plato. Previous volumes have dealt with some of the principal dialogues. For example, the volume entitled "Socrates," contained translations of the Apology, Crito, and parts of the Phædo. The present volume has translations from the Charmides,

Lysis, Laches, Euthydemus and Theætetus. Of course, the best way of studying these great products of the Greek mind is to read the original works; but we live in such a busy age that very few even of those who know the language can accomplish so extensive a work; so that books like the one before us are of very great practical utility. The whole seems to be very well done. But we have particularly tested the work in the very important dialogue "Theætetus," having compared it carefully with the Greek and with other translations. We are able, therefore, to affirm with confidence that the selections are made with judgment and success, nothing being omitted which is of importance for the argument; and further, that the translation is admirable—being at once exact and idiomatic.

TWO PENNILESS PRINCESSES. By Charlotte M. Yonge. London and New York: Macmillan and Company.

The present generation is deeply indebted to Miss Yonge for her many charming historical novels. All parents, and those who are responsible for the education and guidance of the literary tastes of young people, will recognize the importance of such interesting and delightfully written books, and be fully aware of their influence in arousing the desire for further knowledge of the periods treated and of the historical characters introduced in them. "Two Penniless Princesses" is the story of two of the many daughters of the noble, but most unfortunate, James the First, King of Scotland, "the flower of the whole Stewart Race," who in his youth was prisoner at the court of our gallant king, Henry the Fifth, of England (Miss Yonge has written the story of his imprisonment under the title of the "Caged Lion"), and who was afterwards murdered. Miss Yonge has evidently a warm interest in the "Stewart period," as she has written so much concerning it, and her works all show careful study, investigation and reliability on points of history. It is sufficient recommendation to say that the "Penniless Princesses" quite equals its predecessors. The book is prettily and serviceably bound, and both the print and the paper are good.

A YOUNG MACEDONIAN. By the Rev. A. T. Church. Illustrated. London and New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

This is a tale of the time of Alexander the Great, and a capital book for boys. It is one of a kind much needed, having plenty of incident and adventure, and giving much insight into a period of the world's history deeply interesting to a boy, of a time which is probably chiefly connected in his mind with lessons, and, therefore, with some boys possibly distasteful at first, but which a book like this makes both attractive and instructive. There is so much pernicious literature in the present day for young people, unfortunately, to be procured at a very low price, that one welcomes gladly such a book as "A Young Macedonian," which is stirring and exciting enough to make it very readable and at the same time it is improving. In the preface, Mr. Church says: "The visit of Alexander to Jerusalem is recorded only by Josephus. The fact that it is not mentioned by Arrian . . . certainly throws some doubt upon it. . . . Bishop Westcott thinks that Josephus' narrative may be true, and I am content to make this opinion my defence for introducing the incident into my story."

A HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE BRITISH COLONIES. By C. P. Lucas, B.A. Vol. 2. Price 7s. 6d. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1890.

The imprimatur of the Clarendon Press is, in these days, almost sufficient to attest the value of a book to which it is affixed. The volume now before us may, however, stand upon its own merits. Every pains has been taken to secure accuracy, the statistical parts of the book having been mainly written by Mr. Harris of the Colonial Office, who was secretary to the recent Commission to the West Indies, and has given to the work the benefit of his revision. There are three sections—the first dealing with the Bermudas, the second with the West Indian dependencies of Great Britain, and the third with the Falkland Islands and West Georgia. To take the section on Bermuda as an example, the plan is first to give a history of the colony from the time of its discovery to the present time, then to give an account of its government and administration, of its area and geography, of its various products, of its climate, its population, its religion and education, and of its finances and general relations. At the end of each section a list of books is added, from which more minute information may be obtained. We believe that the book, as it stands, will be quite sufficient for all ordinary purposes of information; and wherever we have tested it, we have found it accurate. The contents of the book are rendered more intelligible and useful by a series of eleven excellent maps and a diagram which shows the area in square miles of the larger colonies named as compared with Wales, and of the smaller as compared with the Isle of Wight.

HEROES OF THE NATIONS: PERICLES. By Evelyn Abbott, M.A. Price \$1.50. New York: Putnam; Toronto: Williamson. 1891.

This volume belongs to a series which seems intended as a companion to a previous series—"The Story of the Nations." We are happy to say that, so far as it has gone,

the present series contrasts favourably with its predecessor, which had too many weak volumes in it. Mr. Evelyn Abbott has many qualifications for writing a life of Pericles. He is a good scholar, has a large acquaintance not only with the Greek authorities, but with the varied literature which has been devoted to the criticism of ancient Greek authors; and he has already produced the first volume of a History of Greece, which, for impartiality and breadth of view, promises to occupy a place of its own. The present work is therefore no mere piece of writing done to order, but is the result of long continued studies. Of the immense work done for Athens, for Greece, for humanity by Pericles, there can, of course, be no question; but different views have been taken as to the general results of his government on the well-being of Athens; and here Mr. Abbott takes a view less favourable to the policy of the great Athenian than has been adopted by recent historians of eminence. In one respect we think the author might have made a more effective volume. His second title, "The Golden Age of Athens," has apparently laid him under the necessity of making his book a history of Greece for the period, and so slightly interfered with the unity of treatment which belongs to a monograph. To some readers, however, this may seem an advantage. The portion of the work devoted to the literature of the age, and especially to the great dramatists, is admirable.

A BRAVE WOMAN. By E. Marlitt. Price 75 cents; New York: Worthington. 1891.

Here is another novel translated from the German, also, like one recently noticed, written by a lady under an assumed name; and we can recommend it without any of the qualifications which accompanied our mention of its predecessor. To inhabitants of this Western World, or even to those familiar with the more aristocratic atmosphere of Great Britain, there may be a certain sense of unreality in the insolent tone of these German Counts and Barons; but we believe the authoress knows her people, and represents them faithfully. Even in Germany "the old order changeth," and the features of national life here portrayed may soon disappear. The heroine of this story is of somewhat transcendent excellence. We are not, however, disposed to find fault with this which is not a very common failing in modern novels. It may be well for us at times to contemplate people a good deal better than ourselves; and it must be admitted that the character of Julia is well sustained throughout. All the other characters stand out distinctly from the canvas, including the two most detestable of them, the Hofmarschall and the Chaplain. The hero, Mainan, provokes us a good deal at first; but we feel reconciled as the story proceeds. We must not let our readers into the secret of the plot; but we can promise a good deal of entertainment to those who take the book in hand. To ourselves it is distinctly a more interesting story than the one by which the authoress has hitherto been best known, "The secret of the aged Ma'amsele." With regard to the translation, it is very fair and perhaps as good as we have a right to expect in work of this kind. We fear that few translators have any conception of the delicacy and difficulty of the work they are undertaking; but that is too long a subject to be further pursued in this place.

TORONTO, OLD AND NEW: A Memorial Volume. Edited by G. Mercer Adam. Toronto: Mail Printing Company. 1891.

If we were to say that this volume is about as good a thing of its kind as could be produced under the necessary conditions of its existence, we think that we could make good our testimony. But we fear that such a statement might equally please or displease those who approved or disapproved of the volume. It is only fair, however, to take account of these necessary conditions in forming an estimate of the value of this book.

As regards the editorial part of the volume, Mr. Mercer Adam has done it about as well as it could be done. If his sketches of living men partake something of the character of what has been called "portraits in oil," they could not properly be of a different character. No writer can give mere photographs of acquaintances, many of them personal friends, whom he is meeting every day. If here and there we meet with a laudatory remark which might with advantage be pruned, at least there is nothing like caricature in the sketches; and, generally, there is a solid basis of truth under the ornamental filling up. That they are well written, interesting, and readable is guaranteed by the author's name.

Of course it will be said, and it has been said, that this is a mere commercial speculation on the part of the *Mail*, and a puff of a number of the citizens of Toronto who have paid for this conferred celebrity. Are these accusations wholly justifiable? Do newspapers generally exist as enterprises of benevolent men for the good of Society? What is the meaning of the objection: "There is no money in it?" We can see very little in this cant about the supposed motives of editors and publishers. It is more to the point to ask whether the *Mail* has given us a good book; and, on the whole, it is a good book. The writing is good, the printing is good, the pictures are generally very good indeed—almost all the likenesses are, at least, recognizable, and the volume is of a handy size and shape.

Obviously there are some very notable omissions, and