

the wife has been guilty before her betrothal, the husband can claim a divorce, but the wife on the same ground cannot.

Desertion, unfitness, imprisonment for life of either party, constitute divorce; and there are special circumstances under which divorce can be obtained, but only by means of direct application to the Emperor (of Russia) the Grand Duke of Finland, who may grant it as a favour. A divorced wife is considered as a widow; she has no more duties towards her husband and can dispose of her person as well as her property. A divorced couple may peaceably settle all about the children, but if they cannot do this the innocent parent is entitled to take charge of them. Both parents must contribute means for their maintenance and education.

It is, however, satisfactory to learn that "divorces occur comparatively seldom in Finland. After Belgium, our country presents the smallest number of divorced marriages."

The position of Finnish women before the law in relation to marriages is dealt with in this paper more fully than will be necessary in any other relation, because the position of its women is always the measure of a country's moral standing, and it is most gratifying to find that Finland and its legislators have not only kept an alert eye on the foremost countries of the world, but have profited by its observations, and does not appear to have been held back by any consideration short of the best interests of its people.

S. A. CURZON.

TWO SONNETS.

I.

TO THE CITY, FLORENCE: TEMP. 1870.

Thou Tuscan city, by fair Arno's sand,
The story of thy glorious past doth ring
Like sweet-toned bells whose notes accord-
ant bring
Great pride, large hope to each Italian land.
For thou hast many noble. On thy strand
Dante had birth and with his threefold string
In sombre, painful, joyous strains on wing
Seraphic, he with wonder lifts our hand.
He sang a deathless song to death and life.
A brother soul came after; in thy Dome
His words of living fire thundered the good.
These twain suffice thee Spend no strength
in strife
For civic honours lost by thee to Rome
Where Italy's world's capital hath stood.

II.

TO A NAMESAKE OF THE CITY: TEMP. 1893.

Sweet name of nascent promise, like a bud
Just bursting into blossom. Poet's pen
Shall write of famous cities, famous men;
Of maidens young and fair, like flowers that
stud
A grassy plain, by banks of river-flood.
No town is fairer than its fairest. Then
I too may write to fairest in my ken,
And ease the fever that distracts my blood.
By innate grace and goodness thou shalt win
The prize of radiant energy beside
Home's hearth, whose joy art thou. Quick
currents flow
That flush thy mantling cheek and from within
Tell the pure impulses which there abide.
No mightier queen than thou my heart
shall know.

ALFRED THOROLD.

Lord Delamere is having splendid sport in Africa. He has, together with the gentleman who is shooting with him, made a bag of 21 old elephants, four small ones, 25 lions, four cheetahs and one leopard, besides several wart hogs and antelopes. Nice little bag.—Baltimore News.

THE CRITIC.

An interesting book has recently been published by Messrs. Macmillan & Company, namely, a translation of Goethe's "Prose Maxims," by Mr. T. Bailey Saunders. Out of a mass some thousand and more in number, as yet only some hundred and fifty of these maxims have found their way into English. Mr. Bailey Saunders has here given us between six and seven hundred of them, nicely prefaced, numbered, classified, and indexed.

Maxims seem ever to have been the delight of contemplative minds. Almost we might say that it is the mark of a contemplative mind to have expressed itself in maxims. Maxims by the score could be culled from Sanscrit literature, the Upanishad abounds with them. The Seven Sages are noted for them. In every writer of active mind and meditative temperament they are found—in Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, Seneca, Bacon, Voltaire, Rochefoucault, Joubert, Amiel, William Hazlitt, Berkeley, Goethe. In fact, a most interesting work might be compiled by culling maxims on particular topics from great writers.

The maxim holds in metaphysics and morals a place analogous to the generalization or deduction in science; it is a crystallization of thought. It is, to utilize a phrase Macaulay applied to Bacon's works, thought packed close and made portable. From this very condensation arises a weakness. There is no finality in thought, the full and complete exposition of any thought would reach to omniscience. And when an attempt is made to confine a thought within narrow boundaries, to give it distinct and definite outlines, there is very great danger of a large mass of thought eluding us. So that epigrams and maxims, much as they may pretend to be pure and undiluted truths, are after all often but fractions of truth. Have we not been taught that truth is "one and eternal"?

At first sight it would seem that in the maxim at all events we are freed from the bias of the writer that in the terseness and concinnity of the aphorism and the epigram there was no room for personal idiosyncrasy, that even if the truth expressed was a fraction not an integer, yet that such fraction was altogether exempt from the errancy of the personal equation. So at first sight it would seem. But a very slight glance at the apophthegms of different writers reveals the fact that it is no more within the power of the writer to keep his own bent and temperament out of the maxim than it is out of the lyric—a fact which goes to corroborate the peccability of this species of expression. We see la Rochefoucault in his "Maximes" as clearly as we see Joubert in his "Pensées," though both the "Maximes" and the "Pensées" pretend to give utterance to absolute thoughts wholly independent of la Rochefoucault and Joubert. So with these "Maxims and Reflections" of Goethe. One of the strongest elements of interest attaching to them is their presentation to us of the views Goethe held upon such topics as life and character, literature and art, science, nature. And not only does it show us how Goethe looked at "all this unintelligible universe," if we take the trouble to compare the maxims of an Englishman, a Frenchman, and a German, it is quite possible to think that there are apparent national as well as individual characteristics. The French mind and manner of thought seem expressly

suiting to apophthegmatic forms of expression, a peculiarity that the French language intensifies. The extreme lucidity combined with concinnity, of which French prose is capable together with that adaptability to delicate and varying shades of meaning, all give the French epigrammatist an immense advantage over the Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic rival. The "Maximes" of la Rochefoucault, we suppose, not only remain unexcelled, but have stood as the exemplars and archetypes of all maxims composed since their appearance. Certainly William Hazlitt avowedly expressed his indebtedness to them as a stimulus—and the warm admirers of Hazlitt must admit that his attempts fall below the French Duke's. Goethe, with Mr. Bailey Saunders before us, we must judge by the translation, perhaps such judgment will be far from fair. However, making allowances for this, it is not difficult to see that the heavy Teutonic mind lacks something that seems to come by inheritance to the agile-witted Gaul. Bacon's maxims might have been called heavy, at least he occupied itself with grave subjects; Goethe's is heavier still. How superior, for example, are the well-known maxims in the "Essay in Studies" to the following:—

"Reading ought to mean understanding, writing ought to mean knowing something, believing ought to mean comprehending, when you desire a thing, you will have to take it; when you demand it, you will not get it; and when you are experienced, you ought to be useful to others."

However, apart from all matters of comparative criticism, these "Maxims and Reflections of Goethe" are most stimulating reading.—As indeed they cannot but be, for they give us an insight into the way a great man looked upon those things of sempiternal and universal interest—life, character, literature, art, science.

WILLIAM COWPER'S COPY OF ROBERT BURNS'S POEMS: 1787.

The juxtaposition of the poet of "The Task" and the poet of "The Jolly Beggar"—of the refined and fastidious scholar and the inspired ploughman—is a pleasant literary surprise. And yet it hardly ought to have been unexpected, seeing that they were not contemporaries, but admittedly the outstanding precursors of William Wordsworth, in England and Scotland respectively, in breaking away from the artificial and conventional in poetry and looking straight at Nature and human nature. Because of this, when we look at the surface subtleties of affinity revealed in themselves. I do not refer to mere accidental circumstance, such as the immortal ride of the race of John Gilpin running parallel with the equally immortal ride and race of Tam o' Shanter, or even to the simple truth of fact that the greater Hymns of the one mate with the greater and purer Songs of the other. I think rather of their common light of glory of imagination, combined with realism, in their nature, the ever-varying aspects of Nature and in the readings of the red-leaved book of the human heart.

I am not aware that Cowper's name ever in the Correspondence of Burns. The first early editions of his successive volumes were expensive and the Scot's resources limited. This perhaps explains how it came about that no knowledge of "The Task" is shown by Burns. All the more satisfying is it that