

Such is the bare outline of the story—but no outline can do it justice. It is a noble book. The character of Pete is one of the grandest in fiction in its simple goodness and perfect trust. We can hardly bear his sufferings after his wife has left him, as he writes letters as if from her to him to protect her good name if she should return. Philip is more complex in character. His crime, at first, lay less in the act than in the concealment; and he suffers even more than Pete. His is the punishment of selfscorn and ever present fear of disgrace; but the essential nobility of the man is at last shown when he proclaims himself to the world as he is and takes the shame which is the penalty of his sin. Mr. Caine, with an instinct more true than that of the author of "Dean Maitland," does not allow him to die after making his confession; but makes him live and make his atonement by living. We quote a passage from his last speech:

"My countrymen and countrywomen, you who have been so much more kind to me than my character justified or my conduct merited, I say goodbye; but not as one who is going away. In conquering the impulse to go without confessing I conquered the desire to go at all. Here where my old life has fallen to ruin my new life must be built up. That is the only security. It is also the only justice. On this island, where my fall is known, my uprising may come—as is most right—only with bitter struggle and sorrow and tears. But when it comes it will come securely. It may be in years, in many years, but I am willing to wait, I am ready to labour. And, meantime, she who was worthy of my highest honour will share my lowest degradation. That is the way of all women—God love and keep them!"

The exaltation of his tones affected everybody.

"It may be that you think I am to be pitied. There have been hours of my life when I have been deserving of pity.

Do not pity me now, when the dark hours are passed, when the new life has begun, when I am listening at length to the voice of my heart, which has all along been the voice of God."

His eyes shone, his mouth was smiling.

"If you think how narrowly I escaped the danger of letting things go on as they were going, of covering up my fault, of concealing my true character, of living as a sham and dying as a hypocrite, you will consider me worthy of envy instead."

We have said nothing of the minor characters—which are numerous and all true to life—but in speaking of the book the three main characters absorb all our attention. Still we are sure that our readers if, as we advise them, they obtain and read this book will be glad to make the acquaintance of Caesar and Black Tom and Nan, all perfect in their own way. We may add that though the dominant note of the book is tragic, dealing as it does with the wreck of three lives, there is plenty of humour to be found in it.

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#### Paris Letter.

THIS Madagascar business does not please the French at all. The Colonial Expansionist—pity there is no colonial "development" press—does its level best to work up the nation, to bow down and worship the national riches of the island and its glorious strategical importance. The nation does not dance to that piping. Parliament has voted the millions and the men. But the persons you speak to shake their heads, remain cold as icicles and demand your opinion about the expedition. Now all that remains to be done is to wait and see. The French have at last to recognize that no European nation is thwarting their plans to compel the Hovas to be mindful of the protectorate rights of France over them. European powers will have nothing to say, till France has finished up with the job. Outsiders have treaties that should be respected. If France intends to appropriate to herself the island, or to adjudge to herself privileges that other powers will not be allowed to participate in, then the difficulties will arise. Till that stage be reached the impartial observer has only to look on.

As one good result, from the Anglo-Russian *entente*, the tone of the Boulevard journal towards England has become gentle as the cooing of the cushat dove. And that is no small mercy. France could not attempt to abuse England, the accepted friend of Russia; the two rejoined friends that had no axes to grind at each other's expense. Russia might hint

that her friends must be treated as her friends, especially when they are powerful, and chivalrously propose to let by-gones be by-gones, march together hand in hand in the opening up of Asia, and leave European quarrels to the continentally interested. The French did expect a kind of lease of lives, renewable for ever, with respect to the political love of Russia. But a new or rather returned wooer for a share, not the monopoly, of that love has unexpectedly appeared and with antecedents for amity not to be overlooked. "Old wood burns brightest; old soldiers are surest, and old lovers are soundest." Since England has dealt the European cards, security the trumps for herself and her northern partner, William II. has become as quiet as a church mouse. A dual friendship replaces the triple alliance; the latter, when the lease falls in, may find it difficult to be renewed. No power or combination of powers would ever dream of disturbing Europe when England and Russia would forbid the attempt.

Happy is the bride that the sun shines on. The Czar's marriage has been favoured with "Queen's weather." Benedict being now a married man will soon settle down to the plodding affairs of life. Plenty of people mentally throw rice and old slippers after the happy pair. Every prospect smiles for them. The bride has received, as part dowry from her grandmother, the solid amity of the British nation. The French have well taken note of all the members of the Russian embassy being invited to the gala dinner at Windsor Castle, while not forgetting the Czar has been made general-in-chief of the Scots Greys. Her Majesty ought, in return, to be nominated "*Hetwoman*" of the Cossacks.

The death of M. Victor Duruy is deeply and universally regretted. After a tumultuous life as an educational reformer, he has died in his 83rd year, and leaves not an enemy behind. Even the republicans forgot he was an Imperialist, and amongst the most faithful too; the Imperialists pardoned him for being a Liberal, and always on the warpath of progress. He was the most unassuming of men. He was the son of a Paris artisan, who earned his daily wage as a dyer, but managed to save from his humble earnings the means of helping the lad to educate himself. The deceased grappled resolutely with all the educational reforms. As Minister of Public Instruction under the second Empire, he laid the foundations, sowed the seed, of all the educational reforms and innovations that France at present possesses, commencing with the primary school, so up to the university. He breathed life into the dried bones of public education. He grasped the democratic tendencies of the times. He died as he began life "a simpleste." He occupied, even when Minister and Grand Chancellor of the University of France, a modest apartment, on a fifth flat. Griegot ever did the same, and Jules Simon has never lived otherwise. But what a galaxy of intellect mounted the five flights of stairs to visit Duruy. The ex-empress Eugenie never omitted when passing through Paris to make that pilgrimage, for Duruy, perhaps, has been the only man that escaped unscathed, by the rectitude of his character and the patriotic motives of his life, from the ruins of the second Empire. And when the war against Prussia was declared, the ex-minister, though aged nearly 60, became an humble volunteer, and marched as a private in the national guard. The number of educational works he wrote, or inspired, or edited, is quite of a Homer length. He was always clear. France has had more brilliant writers, but as an historian of the Romans, above all, he stated a case well, painted its features accurately, and passed upon events, sound common-sense judgments. He was an indefatigable worker; his brain-power was enormous, and never knew fatigue; 16 and 18 hours a day were his average of work. He only mistook that at 83 a man has not the physical, though possessing the mental robustness of half a century earlier. Member of all learned societies, holding all decorations, he requested to be buried quietly without honors or speeches. France will not forget him. He must graduate two years hence in his grave before he can be accorded the Pantheon.

The French have never yet pronounced an opinion on the Sino-Japanese war, so as to ascertain their leanings. They remained sitting on the fence, anticipating the Celestial Empire perhaps being shaken into fragments and reserving themselves to gather up a few of the debris. The wise German, has observed the same sphinx attitude. Now, France is climbing down to the Anglo-Russian side of the fence