

with vital functions. The æsthetically ugly is that which conspicuously fails to do so; which gives little stimulation, or makes excessive or wasteful demands upon certain portions of the organs. But as in either case the emotional element is weak, it is mainly cognized as an intellectual discrimination. And so we get the idea of the *Æsthetic Feelings* as something noble and elevated because they are not distinctly traceable to any life-serving function.' The manner in which he applies this principle to the sense of sight, in the particular of colour, will sufficiently illustrate its use:

'If we have in one place a patch of red, the portion of the retina which is receiving light from it will have its red-perceiving fibres strongly excited, and, as a necessary consequence, fatigued. If, next, it is directed upon a neighbouring patch of green, the red-perceiving fibres will be at rest, and undergo repair, while the fresh and vigorous green-perceiving structures will receive normal stimulation. Hence, such interchange of colours will be pleasurable. So that all colour-harmony consist in such an arrangement of tints as will give the various portions of the retina stimulation in the least fatiguing order, and all colour-discord in the opposite.'

We should like to quote more fully from a book containing so much careful thought and interesting matter, and to discuss more fully its positions, but space limits forbid a more lengthened review. We could not, certainly, go along with the author, were he to insist on reducing the *subjective* sense of beauty and the ideal to mere physiological processes; but, if Mr. Allen's positions are correct, the analysis is ultimate so far as the *physiological* side of the question is concerned. The very springs and sources of our æsthetic sense-emotions are laid bare, and what has long been believed to be inexplicable, —to be ultimate principles beyond which we could not go—is shown to have a deeper foundation still—is at once explicable and explained. And to explain why 'a thing of beauty is a joy forever,' and why the green fields and the bubbling fountain, the blue bending heavens, the petals of the rose, and the lily's fragrant bell are lovely and precious to the æsthetic sense, is not the least interesting subject of investigation in the interesting field of our complex organization,—lifting the veil, to a very considerable degree, from the mystery of our likes and dislikes. The chapters on Poetry and the Imitative Arts will, perhaps, most interest non-scientific readers, though these will find in the other portions of the book, much food for thought and much interesting information. That on Poetry, in particular, is at once a piece of able analysis and poetical appreciation, containing passages of much literary beauty, of which we are tempted to give the following specimen, containing

much picturesqueness of description combined with melody of expression:—

'Mountain glens, hemmed in with beetling rocks, through which white foaming streams rave ceaselessly; woods and valleys, pastures and meadows dappled with daisies, sweet with the breath of kine, vocal with the song of birds; an Italian lake, bathed in sunset glory, its overhanging terraces rich with autumn tints, while a rainbow spans the tiny cataract that plashes musically into its unruffled bosom, and the soft sound of the vesper bell steals over it from some surrounding campanile, half hidden amid chestnut and orange blossom, far above whose green heads the roar of the thunder and the flash of the lightning play awfully around the pinacles of eternal ice—these are a few of the great concrete wholes with which Poetry deals, whose elements can be sifted and referred to their proper place as we read them over, but which would scarcely repay the toil of a minute and deliberate classification.'

The chapters on the 'Intervention of the Intellect' and the 'Ideal' will also interest general readers, though we think that the most searching analysis must necessarily fail in those mysterious regions where purely sensuous pleasure seems blended with feelings which we instinctively recognize as of a higher and purer order, the mysteries of immaterial mind. As the very word 'æsthetic' is derived from a sense, and that one of the lower ones, we may thoroughly admit the truth of the author's position, that, 'every *Æsthetic Feeling*, though it may incidentally contain intellectual and complex emotional factors, has necessarily for its ultimate and principal component, pleasures of sense, ideal or actual, either as tastes, smells, touches, sounds, forms, or colours.'

ROSINE. By J. G. Whyte Melville. Montreal: Lovell, Adam, Wesson & Co.

The historical novel, which seemed out of favour for a time, seems to have again revived. 'Rosine' is a vivid story, in Mr. Whyte Melville's rapid, lively style, of the terrible days immediately preceding the French Revolution; days of plot and counter-plot, intrigue and counter-intrigue, when no man's life was safe, and no man knew where the next bolt might fall; when democrat was plotting against aristocrat, and aristocrat again against his fellow aristocrat; when the vices and follies of a haughty and voluptuous aristocracy had driven an oppressed people into a state of excitement and disorganization, rapidly tottering into the grand earthquake, which has in a manner faded from men's minds now, but which will ever remain one of the deepest blood-stains on the pages of history.

For one of the foremost figures in the pre-