

every likelihood of his being added to the long list of those who have deserted it entirely for literature. Instead of reading law, he read hard at English poetry, from Chaucer to Burns, and then took to writing it. He produced most between the years 1815 and 1823, at which latter date his 'Flood of Thessaly, and Other Poems' saw the light; but the work to which he chiefly owes his place in our literature, his 'English Songs,' appeared in 1832; and his 'Essays and Tales in Prose,' in 1853. The lyrics published for the first time in the present volume are not likely to add to his laurels, with the possible exception of the last one, entitled 'Exhumo.' After his marriage, in 1824, he did as very few of those have done who have taken his first step, from law to literature; turning once more to his profession, and welcoming the hard and rather monotonous work of a conveyancer with a zest that may fairly be called surprising, after his indulgence of almost antipodal tastes. There are very many who have 'penned a sonnet while they should engross,' but by no means many who, having met with such success as Barry Cornwall's, in verse, have left it to go back to the prosiest of prose. In 1831 he was called to the bar, and in 1832 was appointed a Commissioner of Lunacy. His long and peaceful life came to an end in 1874. Mr. Patmore has appropriately closed his biographical notes by the insertion of the beautiful poem by Swinburne, which appeared on the death of 'Barry Cornwall':—

'Beloved of men, whose words on our lips were honey,
Whose name in our ears and our fathers' ears was sweet.'

There can be no question as to the enjoyment which is to be derived from this volume as a whole. But its very fragmentary character spoils it for steady perusal, making progress through it very jerky. Its flavor is best obtained by dipping into it here and there at random.

PHYSIOLOGICAL ÆSTHETICS. By Grant Allen, B.A. London: Henry T. King & Co. 1877.

The most cursory reader of the philosophy of the day must be aware how closely the investigation into the relations of mental phenomena with the material organism, or as many prefer to put it, their origin from it, is pursued by some of the most profound thinkers of the age. What we term æsthetic feelings and pleasures have hitherto been comparatively neglected in this investigation. Even the Germans, as Prof. Bain recently remarked, have been accustomed to consider them subjectively, as purely mental phenomena, rather than as effects from physical causes. But relentless science has begun to seize now even on these more ethereal emotions, and will not allow us any longer to simply enjoy a beautiful land-

scape, a noble statue, or an exquisite poem, without telling us exactly *how* our enjoyment arises from the effect produced on our nervous organization by the forces of the external world.

It is doubly satisfactory to a Canadian critic, in noticing an able and suggestive work on this subject, to recognize the fact that it is written by a Canadian—Mr. Grant Allen, son of Mr. J. A. Allen, of Kingston. No one who has read Mr. Grant Allen's contributions to the CANADIAN MONTHLY will be surprised to find that he has produced a book, of which an eminent authority in England speaks as a 'valuable contribution to analytical philosophy,' or to note in his treatment of such a subject, clear and distinct thought and expression, acute and delicate observation, careful and subtle analysis, and a poetical as well as a philosophical view when the subject admits of it. To start with, Mr. Allen thus defines æsthetic pleasures and pains: 'By the æsthetic pleasures and pains we mean those which result from the contemplation of the beautiful or the ugly, in art or nature, alike in the actuality and in the idea. So that, speaking properly, the subject-matter of our investigation will be the feelings aroused in man by the beautiful in nature, and in the arts of architecture, painting, sculpture, music, and poetry; special attention being paid throughout to the component factors of the last.' In the outset of his investigation, he first examines the nature of pleasures and pains generally, differentiating afterwards the feeling we call æsthetic. By a very ingenious and aptly illustrated process of investigation, he arrives at the conclusion that 'pain is the subjective concomitant of destructive action or insufficient nutrition in any sentient tissue. Pleasure is the subjective concomitant of the normal amount of function in any such tissue.'

From this position, he goes on to discuss the pleasures and pains of what are more especially called the 'æsthetic' senses, in regard to which he makes the following suggestive remark: 'In the lower senses, almost every activity has a direct bearing upon life-giving functions. But in the higher and specially æsthetic senses, sight and hearing, no activity bears directly upon these functions, and comparatively few indirectly. And it is just because the eye and ear are so little connected with vitality, that theirs are specially the æsthetic senses. It is the business of Art to combine as many as possible of their pleasurable sensations, and to exclude, so far as lies in its power, all their painful ones; thus producing that synthetic result which we know as the æsthetic thrill.' Æsthetic feelings he thus differentiates:—'The æsthetically beautiful is that which affords the Maximum of Stimulation with the Minimum of Fatigue or Waste, in processes not directly connected