

THE LITERATURE OF THE RESTORATION.

IN any generation popular literature is but the reflection of the thoughts of the people, and in considering the writings of this period we must first inquire into the character of the times.

Under Cromwell the Puritans had aimed to set up a visible kingdom of God upon earth; and, with this end in view, godliness was the chief qualification for any public office. The Covenant which bound the nation to God, bound it to enforce God's laws even more earnestly than its own; the Bible lay on the table of the House of Commons, and its prohibition of swearing, of drunkenness, of fornication, became part of the law of the land. "The want of poetry and of fancy in the common Puritan temper, condemned half the popular observances as superstitious. It was superstitious to keep Christmas or to deck the house with holly and ivy; it was superstitious to dance around the village May pole; it was flat popery to eat a mince pie. The rough sport, the mirth and fun of 'Merry England,' were out of place in an England called with so great a calling." After a long struggle between the Puritans and the playwrights, even the theatres were closed.

As the great representative of this age and the champion of Puritan views, we have the illustrious John Milton. He wrote his "Defensio Populi Anglicani" in reply to a strong and vigorous pamphlet by Salmasius, on the divine right of kings, and years later, living in obscurity, pain and want, he composed that greatest of modern epics, "Paradise Lost."

But when, in 1660, Charles II. was restored to the throne of his fathers, the nation plunged into the most violent excesses, and the king lived a life of idleness and profligacy. One of the comedies of the times tells the courtier that "he must dress well, dance well, fence well, have a talent for love-letters, an agreeable voice, be amorous and discreet—but not too constant." Those things which in Cromwell's time had been upheld and revered, were now down-throdden and mocked at, and Butler, in his "Hudibras," satirizes the Puritans as tyrannical and hypocritical. It was this fierce denunciation of the Puritans, together with its wit and ingenuity, that gained such popularity for "Hudibras."

Perhaps in the character of the drama the low state of morality is shown more plainly than in any other department of literature. The noble and elevating drama of the Elizabethan era was supplanted by one in which the French was imitated, but only to the extent of its grossness without its poetry, good taste

and delicacy. Wit took the place of humor, and foolish affection that of natural passion. In this corrupt age women, for the first time, appeared on the stage, and all favorite speeches were given by them.

At this time Dryden was struggling for some position by which he could gain an easy livelihood, and thinking dramatic writing a lucrative field, devoted himself to that work. He chose such subjects as suited the public taste, and degraded all his writings to suit that taste.

The glaring immorality of the times was not allowed to pass without a word of censure. Jeremy Collier, a sturdy clergyman, came out against the indecency of the drama, and published a work entitled "A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage." Though a defence was undertaken by Wycherly and Congreve, yet Dryden acknowledged the reproof, and changed the tone of his writings.

Another who was not infected by the contagion around him was John Bunyan. In 1660 he was imprisoned in Bedford jail, and there in seclusion he wrote his "Pilgrim's Progress." "Its English is the simplest and homeliest English which has ever been used by any great English writer; but it is the English of the Bible. Wherever thought finds expression, or there are hearts to be impressed, this thinker of Bedford will shape character and destiny when the chiselled lines of the granite have crumbled, and the headstone shall claim kindred with the dust it commemorates." "He being dead, yet speaketh."

SCATARI.

WHILE spending a summer on the eastern coast of Cape Breton we heard continual reference to Scatari, and came, at last, to desire a more intimate acquaintance with that island.

So, one pleasant September morning, we sailed away, and, arriving at our destination, found a low half moon about nine miles in length. One side is quite rugged and difficult to approach, but on the other is a snug harbor protected from the Atlantic by little Hay Island. Around this harbor the fishermen build their huts, for Scatari is a fishing reserve owned by government; and, through the summer, almost every place on the neighboring coast is represented here, and the harbor is full of boats. A great many of the boats are owned by Frenchmen, who live in rude sheds. The English have more comfortable quarters, but they seemed rough enough to our unaccustomed eyes.

There are comparatively few permanent inhabitants. We wondered how any one could be contented to settle down there for life. Finally, we decided that