

sis of the characters and situations. Even, if at the time, the full force and significance of the critical remarks of men of genius, may not be apparent to them, fuller light will come later on, and the instruction will not be fruitless. It would seem that æsthetic criticism must almost on necessity be brought to bear, in order to engage and stimulate the reader's attention; and in the case of literature which affords such a marvellous and inexhaustible field for the exercise of the highest critical faculty, surely it would be a mistake to ignore it utterly in books prepared for the use of schools and immature minds. We think it would be wise to confine such instruction within limits; but a discreet and properly cultivated teacher will find little difficulty in assigning these limits. Mr. Rolfe, as we have said, aims at providing by judicious excerpts from the best criticisms, some assistance of this kind. It is perhaps doubtful whether sentences divorced from their context, are likely to convey the critic's meaning very clearly to the student; they, perhaps, are more for the teacher's benefit, and will be of great use to him, if judiciously employed. The unwearied labours of Shakesperian critics have, indeed, not borne as precious fruit as could be wished, and the critical result of any real value is contained in a very few books. Nothing could be better than Professor Dowden's *Primer*; and his short but lucid contrast of Brutus and Cassius, in the page devoted to this drama, should be illustrated from the play itself. Indeed no criticism should be taught without being justified out of Shakespeare's own mouth. There is one very annoying defect in all of the valuable editions of English classics published by the Clarendon Press. It is astounding that their value should be so much depreciated as it is, by the want of indexes. In this respect, Mr. Rolfe's editions are worthy of all praise. While upon this subject, we would call attention to the value, to all teachers of literature, of the *London Academy*. It is not an expensive paper, and it is the very best chronicle of contemporary English literature. Besides, it contains brief accounts of the meetings of

Literary Societies, and its notices of papers read before the Shakesperian Societies, from time to time, contain much new and valuable information on points of Shakesperian criticism of all kinds. For some time to come *Cæsar* will be of special interest to High School Masters, and those preparing for University Honours in English, and for First-Class Certificates. No editions better for school purposes can be found than those we have been discussing. Craik's "*English of Shakespeare*," edited also by Rolfe, is really only a philological commentary on this play, and contains matter of the highest value to the scholar and the teacher. With these nothing is left to be desired except it may be that *Cæsar* may soon be included in the list of Furness's invaluable *Variorum* editions.

THOMAS CARLYLE—his life, his books, his theories, by Alfred H. Guernsey. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Toronto: A. Piddington.

We have little to say about this issue of the Handy-Volume Series. To those who don't know what books Carlyle has written, it will no doubt fulfil the promise of its title and come in handily for their information. The names of all the works are given, and two or more extracts from each. But for any assistance in discovering the meaning and drift of Carlyle's philosophy, or for any intelligent criticism on his writings, we shall look here in vain. If we were asked what scheme Mr. Guernsey had built his book upon, we should say that the problem he set himself was probably this: "Given a distaste in the Northern States for the views held by Carlyle as to negroes being made to work—required to prove a steady deterioration in the philosopher, culminating in the '*Latter day Pamphlets*,' in which such views appeared." This task he has accomplished to his own satisfaction, and, let us hope, to that also of his countrymen. Possibly, however, some people may be inclined to believe that there is more truth in the views even of an old Carlyle than in those held by the youngest and jauntiest of American book-makers. Still, as we have said, to those