

For the REVIEW.]

Notes on English.

"HENRY ESMOND" AND "WARREN HASTINGS."

A letter of December 14th hopes "you will find room in your *Notes* for a set of questions on *Henry Esmond*, such as you gave on some of Scott's, and which I found most helpful." And a post-card of March 21st asks, "Will you, through the REVIEW, give a set of examination papers on *Warren Hastings*?"

I try to satisfy both correspondents this month. The *Hastings* questions were prepared for a class in school. In writing those on *Esmond*, I was thinking of the literature class at the Summer School.

Now I am out of subjects for these Notes, and unless I am supplied with some before the end of April, I shall have to write for May without the pleasant feeling that somebody besides myself is sure to be interested in what is written.

In the *Esmond* questions I write E for the name of the book and Esmond for the name of the man.

- HENRY ESMOND.

1. What rank do you assign to Thackeray among the novelists you know best, and what to E. among your best-known novels? Give your reasons.

2. It is often said that Thackeray was a cynic. Discuss this from what you know of him (1) as a man, (2) as a writer generally, (3) as the writer of E.

3. How old was Thackeray when E. was published? What had he written before that? Which of his previous works had prepared him in a special way for writing E.? In what special way?

4. Taine says a work of literature is a transcript of contemporary manners. In what sense is this true of E., or of Quentin Durward, or of *Romola*?

5. What is gained or lost by making the hero tell the story, and what by making him tell it in the third person?

6. Mention any criticisms of this work that you have heard or read, and that seem to you particularly good or bad. Wherein consists their goodness or badness?

7. Discuss these bits of criticism:

a. The gist of the book is melancholy throughout.

b. There is not a page in the book over which a thoughtful reader cannot pause with delight.

c. Esmond is a prig.

d. Esmond is a gentleman from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot.

e. The hero is in love with the daughter all through the story and marries the mother at the end.

8. How was Esmond related to his wife before he married her? Construct a genealogical table to show the connection.

9. Compare Esmond's character as sketched by his daughter in the preface and as shown in the course of the story.

10. In what connection do the following passages occur, and what do they mean?

a. Shall History ever pull off her periwig and cease to be court-ridden?

b. She was a critic, not by reason, but by feeling.

c. Lord Mohun pleaded his clergy.

d. My reputation ended a mile beyond Maudlin Tower.

e. To love her is a libelal education.

f. They knock under too soon,—that's the fault I find with 'em.

g. Tom capped the proctor.

11. Was Thackeray successful in imitating the language of Queen Anne's time? How do you know? Point out some of the differences between our language then and now.

12. What effect do you think should be produced on a girl's mind by a study of Beatrix's character?

13. "E. is a whole from beginning to end with its tale well told, its purpose developed, its moral brought home—and its nail hit well on the head and driven in." What does the first clause mean? What are the "purpose," the "moral," the "nail?" What are the qualities of a well told tale? Which do you think the best told parts of this tale?

14. Of a part of E. a brother-novelist has said, "It has hardly been beaten in English prose fiction."

Select a few chapters, one or other of which you think may have called forth this high praise. Tell why you think so highly of these chapters.

15. Study carefully the conversations in the book, especially that of Lady Castlewood, and write out whatever you find yourself thinking about it.

What two passages would you select as presenting the finest pair of contrasted views of the same character?

17. It was a saying of Thackeray's that "Fun is good, truth is better, and love is best of all. To what extent has he acted up to this dictum in E.?"

WARREN HASTINGS.

1. Note some differences between a trip from England to India as made (1) in Hastings' time, (2) in Macaulay's time, (3) now.

2. Explain mohur, rupee, lac, moharajah, begum, nabob, Mogul, Nizam, Peishwa, Mahrattas.

3. Distinguish between Sujah Dowlah and Surajah Dowlah, also between Stafford and Strafford. For what purpose does Macaulay introduce these last two into the essay?

4. What are some of the chief features of Macaulay's style? Illustrate by quotations.

5. Mention some of the finest passages in the essay, and quote some extracts from them. What is fine about them?

6. Mention any cases in which Macaulay has failed to convince you that his views are the right ones. How do you account for his failure in these cases?

7. What sort of a man does Hastings seem to you to have been? How do you think Francis would have answered this question? and Burke? and Marion?

8. Discuss Burke's conduct toward Hastings.

9. Take up one of the chief charges against Hastings and make out the best case you can for or against him on it,—taking the side you think the right one.

10. In the trial part of the essay write notes on about a dozen passages that you think need them.

A. CAMERON.

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