

compatriots, 'to smile a kind o' sickly smile and curl up on the floor.' But no! The 'subsequent proceedings' interest him and us extremely, especially when we find the *Boston Traveller* coming up to time bravely, and proving itself at home among the classics by declaring 'Deirdrè' to contain 'the grandeur and magnificence of the Greek of the Iliad and Odyssey, the beauty, the grace, the rich imagery of the Æneid, and the rhythmic flow of Dante's writings.' The critic here has 'gone one better' (as poker players have it) than Dryden, when he compared Milton to a twin-like conglomeration of Homer and Virgil, and we should have thought that he had left no opening for improvement. But we know better now, and whenever we are at a loss in future, we shall order up a file of our contemporary, *The Springfield Republican*. That periodical, in face of this praise of vols. 1 and 2, is more than equal to the task of lauding vol. 3, and there is a mastery of self and a sense of deep innate power visible in the way it accomplishes its mission, without derogating from preceding numbers. Vol. 3 is 'better sustained.' Oh! ye printers' devils and ambitious Magazine contributors, has it come to this? Can a novel be 'better sustained' than a work which unites the varied magnificences of Homer, Virgil, and Dante? If this be possible, what can be said of 'Kismet,' which is, we suppose, the fourth volume, and must be taken to have got several literary hemispheres above the blind old poet, who is, in sporting parlance, 'not in the hunt with it.' It was with such depressed feelings that we attacked 'Kismet.'

'Kismet' is a novel of American life, with Egypt for the scene of action. Mr. Hamlyn, a shoddy parvenu, with a taste for Byron, and a glassy brown eye, has chartered a dahabeah up to the cataracts. His party consists of his daughter Bell, the heroine, and her step-mother, whom she invariably calls 'Flossy.' As soon as we are admitted into Miss Hamlyn's confidence and see her reading her absent lover's letter, we know by that fatal prescience bestowed on inveterate novel-readers, that another lover is not far off, that she will treat number one very badly, and will get retributive justice dealt out to her in the end. And when she compares a hateful stranger at a Cairene hotel to a *carafe* full of artificially frozen water (an original simile that, by the way), we know that *he* and no other is to be the favoured individual. Before long, the Hamlyns' dahabeah, or Nile-boat, overtakes another boat, and the future lover is introduced; while speedily after, both boats catch up with a third, whose occupants are English by way of variety. The fun then thickens. We have a visit to a ruin every other day, and whenever the moon is favorable we are trotted off with our lovers to some huge temple, whose pillars

cast great black bands of shadow . . and so on. In fact, whenever in doubt or difficulty, the author dishes up a new temple, in the same way that a whist player with a strong hand of trumps is apt to return persistently to that fascinating lead. But for one who has studied his guide-book so carefully, we must say that there are some bad mistakes in this book. Egyptian builders were innocent of arches, so the term used on p. 71 is misleading. All the temples in that country were built on the vertical pressure principle, with large horizontal lintels stretching from pillar to pillar. While alluding to architecture, we would draw attention to an odd expression used in relation to some carved ornaments: 'strange geometrical looking forms.' How a form could be geometrical looking without being geometric, is not easily understood. The following sentence, too, is most curiously involved and incomprehensible: 'A thing that does not include one's self is always different and generally objectionable.'

At one period in the book we thought that Miss Gerty Campbell, an English friend of the heroine's, was about to complicate matters by a little intriguing, but after one or two well meant but feeble attempts to make Livingston think that Bell is in love with Captain Blake, and to make Bell think that Livingston is in love with herself, Gerty, the author appears to have dropped that motive. At last they reach the cataracts, turn round, and come back, and we have the temples, the palms, the moons, and the sunsets, *da capo*. How Bell 'drees her weird' between her two lovers, and with what result, we must not divulge. Some of the descriptions in the book are pretty, but the characters and situations are commonplace, and rendered more glaringly so by their setting. Why cannot such people carry on their petty flirtings up and down the Hudson instead of the Nile? one is tempted to ask; and echo answers, why?

In short, if we were driven to adopt the envied style of the *Boston Traveller*, we should say that this book unites the propriety of Ouida's female characters, and that peculiar grace and charm only to be found in Snobkins's 'Peep at the Pyramids,' with the rhythmic melody of Murray's Handbook.

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A MODERN MEPHISTOPHELES. No Name Series. Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson. 1877.

One thing may be said of this series without risk of contradiction, that is, that it is as well and tastefully got up in all the minor but important points of type, binding, and lettering as need be wished. If we might hazard a suggestion, it would be to the effect that the gilt name on the back would look better in