

Scott and Dickens confirmed this view of the matter. It was not the method-loving, scientifically calm and philosophically regulated Goethe, that wrote the first part of Faust, which is almost good enough for Shakespeare, but that wrote the second part of Faust, which is almost too bad for Lord Lytton.

The capable critic can distinguish in many instances, in Shakespeare's own work, between the places where genius alighted and the page became imbued with fiery life, and the places where the spirit of task-work ruled the pen. That I may not seem to speak at random, I would specify the first few lines of conversation between Isabella and Claudio, in the first scene of the third of "Measure for Measure," after the duke and the provost have withdrawn and left the brother and sister alone, as essentially poor and prosaic; whereas when the poet, in the immediate sequel, warms to his work, as the hope of life dawns on Claudio, and he begins to plead with Isabella to save him, the genius of Shakespeare awakes in its might, and one of those passages in which the most secret depths of the human heart are explored, and the lineaments of passion are struck off with subtle and amazing accuracy, and insight, sympathy and expression are all transcendently manifested, is the result. Scott also has many a comparatively flat and monotonous page, executed with conscientious determination at its appointed hour; but he frankly informs us that when he produced those parts of his books which sent the public wild with delight and which even critic dunces, who pestered him with their rules, admitted to be his best, he had not been thinking of rule or method at all, but had been run away by irresistible, boy-like delight in some Nicol Jarvie, or Dugald Dagetty, or Jonathan Oldbuck, out of whose company he could not tear himself, let the story fare as it might. We may pronounce it one of the surest facts on which to base a science of criticism that the artist, literary or pictorial, who is always the master of his genius, has little genius of which to be master.

The case of Mr. Trollope I take to be almost unexampled in literature, "Framleigh Parsonage" is one of the best novels that was ever written—I would hardly undertake to name a dozen superior to it in the English language, and yet it was done to order. Of

such a feat I believe Thackeray to have been incapable, but Thackeray was a greater genius and a greater novelist than Mr. Trollope.

Dickens was a marvel of method, but his task-work habits soon and greatly impaired his genius. I think also that Mr. Trollope's own fame would have been placed on a loftier pedestal if he had worked less to order.

"Framleigh Parsonage" was a superb success, but "Rachel Ray" was not a success at all. Thackeray worked quite regularly enough and cropped the fields of his brain, every whit as often as was desirable.—*Canadian Illustrated News*.

Literary Items.

THE Bible has just been translated into the Korean tongue.

THE *Contemporary Review*, for December, contains a series of letters on the Lord's Prayer, addressed to the clergy, by Mr. Ruskin.

SIX thousand copies of Mr. Brassey's forthcoming book, "Sunshine and Storm in the East," (to be published by Longmans), have been already subscribed for.

VICTOR HUGO, indorses the opinion of Goethe, that a man who would gain literary fame, and who would write with purity, should know no other language than that of the country in which he lives.

THE widow of Adolph Strodtman, the biographer of Heine, is in possession of a lock of hair which was cut from the poet's head after death, and also of an oil portrait of Heine, painted by Ludwig Gassen, of Munich, representing him in his twenty-eighth year. She is anxious to part with these two relics for "amateur prices."

DR. NORTHCOLE says that the word "axing," which is now voted a vulgarism, was considered good English not so long ago, and was really the more correct form. It was given in Wycliffe's Bible in the verse, "Ax and ye shall take." In some parallel instances we have retained the letter "x," as in the word "tax," which was preferred to "task," though in old dictionaries the latter will be found interpreted as a pecuniary payment.