

which, and all the discomforts that will accompany my was not the Diary which was injuring his sight! In spite of being blind, the good God prepare me!" Old Rascal! It it all, one cannot help feeling exceedingly glad that he did not become blind. He lived many years afterwards, and on one occasion bore a part in one of the greatest incidents in English history. He was called as a crown witness in the trial of the seven bishops to prove the publication of the libel for which the prisoners were being tried. James II., as Duke of York, had been head of the Admiralty, and had been very kind to Pepys. Perhaps he counted on Pepys repaying his kindness by giving evidence to assist him in his prosecution of the bishops, but fortunately for himself Pepys could not, or would not, assist James. He gave his evidence apparently quite truthfully and fairly, and it was of no value to the prosecution. Volume IX. of this edition will probably deal with this matter and others in Pepys' subsequent career. Before parting with the book a word must be said for Mrs. Pepys. Pepys unconsciously portrays her while he portrays himself. The much injured woman forgives her husband, and the diary closes almost like a novel would close with the reconciliation of the husband and wife. Pepys' matrimonial difficulties were all caused by himself. He was occasionally very jealous of his wife, so jealous that he must have made himself ridiculous—he certainly is so in his own account of himself, but when his wife became jealous of him from the evidence of what took place under her own eyes, he seemed to think it outrageous. The wind up of the quarrel was that Pepys promised never to go out without some one to take care of him. He kept fairly well to his new resolutions, and as the Diary reaches its close, we hear less and less of his giving trouble to Mrs. Pepys. She must have gone through a great deal of unhappiness, although she had a spirit of her own. "But when I come home, hoping for a further degree of peace and quiet, I find my wife upon her bed in a horrible rage afresh, calling me all the bitter names, and rising, did fall to revile me in the bitterest manner in the world, and could not refrain to strike me and pull my hair, which I resolved to bear with, and had good reason to bear with." The climax came on the 12th January, 1668-9. The incident is too long to quote except that "at last, about one o'clock, she came to my side of the bed, and drew my curtain open, and with the tongs red hot at the ends, made as if she did design to pinch me with them, at which, in dismay I rose up, and with a few words she laid them down; and did, by little and little, very sillily, let all the discourse fall." Poor woman! Like her sex.

We close this somewhat lengthy review of this most interesting diary, with an expression of regret that all this exposure of human frailty has been made public. Some of it is amusing, but on the whole the effect is saddening, and if ancient scandals are revived, why all the world could not contain the books that would be written. The result of this edition is that Pepys' Diary will be banished from shelves which young people can reach. Those who are older and more hardened may read it without doing themselves much harm, but Pepys can never more hold the place he has held in English literature. We will always think Lord Braybrooke was right.

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"In the Village of Viger." *

MR. DUNCAN CAMPBELL SCOTT has won a first place among our poets, but like some of our other singers, he is not content with that, and makes a bid for a place as a writer of fiction. His "In the Village of Viger" is unique in Canadian literature. In it he does not attempt to attract by story interest; the plot is of the slightest kind in any of the sketches. His aim seems to be to give us by means of incidents selected from the every-day life of a French-Canadian village, an insight into the hearts and homes of a people primitive in their simple manners,—a relic of a bygone civilization.

The sketches are very uneven, several of them—such as "The Little Milliner" and "Josephine Labrosse"—being decidedly weak and trivial; while several—particularly "The Bobolink" and "The Pedler"—have a vigour and

* "In the Village of Viger." By Duncan Campbell Scott. Copeland & Day: Boston.

finish that reminds one of the school of modern French writers, who have been so successful in this form of literature. But even "The Little Milliner" has an interest of its own. Mr. Scott has constructed the sketch in such a way as to give us a vivid realisation of his village. He has a poet's eye for effects, and by a few skilful touches is able to make his picture real to the most careless reader,—and the reader of short stores is usually of this character.

Anyone who has ever seen a French-Canadian village must recognise the truth and fullness of this description: "The houses, half-hidden amid the trees, clustered around the slim steeple of St. Joseph's which flashed like a naked pond in the sun. They were old and the village was sleepy, almost dozing, since the mill, behind the rise of land, on the Blanche, had shut down." But this Viger was to be lost to the world, and before it came under the baneful influences of modern advancement Mr. Scott has seen fit to present in literary form some of the phases of its life. "The change was coming," he says, "however, rapidly enough. Even now, on still nights, above the noise of the frogs in the pools, you could hear the rumbling of the street-cars and the faint tinkle of their bells, and when the air was moist the whole southern sky was luminous with the reflection of a thousand gas lamps." These quotations are from the opening paragraph of the book, which serves the double purpose of placing the background of the stories before us, and telling why the writer has seen fit to set down the loves and the hates of this remote corner of human society.

Each of the ten stories will be found to have an interest of its own, but to our mind the most striking are "The Bobolink" and "The Pedler." "The Bobolink" is peculiarly suited to Mr. Scott's genius. He is not a dramatic writer. The lyric pipe is the instrument he handles best, and the qualities that have made him strong in poetry are abundantly illustrated in this sketch. The drawing of old Garnaud, the shoemaker of Viger, is well done; and while Madame Laroque and Monsieur Cuerrier will remain fixed in our memories, Etienne Garnaud, the "merry"-hearted shoemaker, will hold a place in both our hearts and our minds. Could anything be finer than this scene between Etienne, the blind girl, and the captive bobolink:

"Well, but birds must have uncles, if they have fathers just like we have."

"Old Etienne puckered up his eyes and put his awl through his hair. The bird ran down a whole cadence, as if he was on the wind over a wheat-field; then he stopped."

"There, Uncle Garnaud, I know he must mean something by that. What did he do all day before he was caught?"

"I don't think he did any work. He just flew about and sang all day, and picked up seeds, and sang, and tried to balance himself on the wheat-ears."

"He sang all day? Well, he doesn't do that now."

"The bird seemed to recall a sunny field-corner, for his interlude was as light as thistledown, and after a pause he made two little sounds like the ringing of bells at Titania's girdle."

"And the little girl's heart was moved, and Etienne's was moved with hers, and his pet bird was freed to join its comrades in the broad fields."

It is in a sketch such as this that the writer excels. He is a poet, and so long as the sketch calls out the poet's imagination and sympathies he works with a master hand. In his dramatic work, however, he is weak, and although several of the dramatic situations are good he lacks sureness of touch. In "Josephine Labrosse" there was an excellent opportunity for dramatic skill. Francois Xavier Beaugrand de Champagne was a splendid subject, but it would have required the author of "Tartarin of Tarascon" to have done him justice. But the whole book promises well, and we may expect to find that the reception given to this little volume will encourage Mr. Scott to try something more ambitious in the same vein.

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Sir Joseph Prestwich, the great geologist, died on the twenty-third of June, at the age of eighty-four. He had been President of the Geological Society, and Professor of Geology at Oxford.