

Hungarian nobleman who foolishly remarked that he had, in his own country, shot no less than five foxes in one day. He was cut by his friends, scorned by the woman he loved, summarily excluded from the privileges of a club, and haled before a police magistrate and condemned to pay a fine of fifty pounds before he learned that in England to shoot a fox or to kill it in any other way, except with a pack of hounds, etc., is, in the eyes of Englishmen, a far baser crime than to steal a purse.

Another collection of short stories is by Will Carleton, so well known by his "Farm Ballads," "City Ballads," and other similar volumes in verse. The first of the stories and the one from which the volume takes, in part, its name is one full of humour and practical good sense. It is not so long ago that grown-up men and women could be found in the winter months in many of our Canadian schools, not, indeed, learning the alphabet, but earnestly striving to overtake some of the ground circumstances had compelled them to lose in earlier years; but we venture to say that no Canadian school-master or school-mistress ever had the experience of the "young lady with classical face and large brown eyes, who conducted the elementary university" in "School District No. 5, Town of Dover, County of Livingston:" a winter apparition of "a strange, rough-looking old man of sixty, whose hair and beard were drifts in themselves," who missed his chance in early life, "never even went arter the alferbet and didn't hev it brought" to him, "workin' along torge the end o' life an' liable to go into the nex' world at any time without any book larnin' to recommend" him, and who wanted the sensation of "settin' in the school-house hour arter hour, an' day arter day, and lookin' at the other boys an' gals, and seein' on 'em read an' write an' spell, an' wishin' Saturday would come, an' cuttin' up with 'em, and bein' told to 'tend to my lessons, an' goin' out to recess, and playin' with the rest of the scholars, an' then 'Come, come away, the school-bell now is ringin',' an' a doin' generally jest what I wish I could ha' done when I was a boy. I don't expect, school-mom, that I'll larn so awful very much, but I'd like to know how to string letters together enough to hold a newspaper right side up an' git a-hold of what lies it's a-tellin' of. An' I'd be glad to find out, school-mom, how to write my name. But the biggest thing is, I want to be a school boy—jest once in my life." The story is full of humour and is told with an art of narrative altogether commendable. The other stories in the volume are almost equally entertaining; but we should like to ask Mr. Carleton, if, while the "school-mom" with "classical face" speaks unimpeachable English the small boys and girls of School District No. 5, Town of Dover, and elsewhere, habitually speak the dialect of the white-haired seeker after knowledge who wanted to learn the "alferbet" and be a school-boy "jest once" in his life.

"Flotsam" tells the story of Harry Wylam, a young fellow of good parts, but with some weaknesses, who was born and orphaned in India, brought up and educated in England; who fought bravely only to win disgrace in the Indian Mutiny, and who died miserably in South Africa, alone and unfriended, except by an impossible colonial bishop who is introduced at the eleventh hour. We are not going to tell the story; it is enough to say that it is a sad, disappointing, depressing, hopeless one. If it is "a study of a life," we cannot say that it is well done. The "consequences" seem to us inconsequential. Nearly everyone seems to go to the devil without any particular reason for it; and even Captain Marqueray, the silent slave of Duty, does not get the rewards and destination he had fairly earned. Mr. Merriman writes like a journalist, but with a carelessness that we trust is not characteristic of the conscientious journalist Marqueray, or "Old Marks," as Harry Wylam irreverently called him, is one of the principal characters in the book, but contradictory portraits are drawn of him when we know that neither time nor service has altered his appearance, and that he is not masquerading in disguise. At page 99, he is "a man of twenty-eight, who looked older;" at page 130, he is "the quiet, grey-haired man" who spoilt a friendly family party by an untimely visit, and a few days later his "smooth, black hair" catches the eye of a native prince in the smoking-room of the Calcutta Field Club. It seems to us that Mr. Merriman did not exactly know what sort of a looking man "Old Marks" was; or, perhaps, an "edition intended for circulation only in India and in the British Colonies" was

not subjected to very scrupulous revision. Altogether the book is likely to prove but "poor flotsam" on the tide of current fiction.

#### BRIEFER NOTICES.

*The Chouans*, by H. de Balzac, translated by Ellen Marriage; *La Grande Bretèche* and other stories, by H. de Balzac, translated by Clara Bell; *Eugenie Grandet*, by H. de Balzac, translated by Ellen Marriage; *Tartarin on the Alps*, by Alphonse Daudet, translated by Henry Frith. Macmillan's Colonial Library. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd. New York: Macmillan & Co. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd.—These specimens of Macmillan's Colonial Library are particularly interesting. Everybody knows of "Eugenie Grandet," but everybody does not know "Les Chouans," while to most readers "*La Grande Bretèche*" is an unknown chapter of Balzac. Nowadays, when analysis is at least as conspicuous for effrontery as for penetration; nowadays when the desire to wash one's hands (commended by Saint Beuve) after the perusal of the real is unknown, it is, perhaps, well to turn to the pages of the great realist upon whose works a stigma, even of Saint Beuve, can leave no stain. The translations are in clear, forcible English, and to each volume Mr. George Saintsbury has added a suggestive preface. The inimitable "Tartarin" of M. Daudet is also included in this series, which contains many other volumes of this distinguished French author, including "Tarescon sur les Alpes."

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#### Some Canadian Women Writers.

Thomas O'Hagan, M.A., Ph.D., in the Catholic World.

A REMARKABLE feature of the Canadian literature of to-day is the strength of its women writers. Especially is this notable within the domain of poetry. Some of the sweetest and truest notes heard in the academic groves of Canadian song come from our full-throated sopranos. Nor does the general literature of our country lack enrichment from the female pen. History, biography, fiction, science, and art—all these testify to the gift and grace of Canadian women writers, and the widening possibilities of literary culture in the hearts and homes of the Canadian people.

England has grown, perhaps, but one first-rate female novelist, and it need, therefore, be no great disappointment or wonder that none of her colonies have as yet furnished the name of any woman eminent in fiction. The truth is the literary expression of Canada to-day is poetic, and the literary genius of her sons and daughters for the present is growing verseward. Canada has produced more genuine poetry during the past decade of years than any other country of the same population in the world. What other eight young writers whose work in poetry will rank in quality and technique with that of Roberts, Lampman, Scott, Campbell, Miss Machar, Miss Wetherald, Miss Johnson, and Mrs. Harrison? It is enough to say that these gifted singers have won an audience on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Bourbon lilies had scarcely been snatched from the brow of New France when the hand and heart of woman were at work in Canadian literature. Twenty years before Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen had written "*Castle Rackrent*" and "*Pride and Prejudice*," Mrs. Frances Brooke, wife of the chaplain of the garrison at Quebec during the vice-regal régime of Sir Guy Carleton, published in London, England, the first Canadian novel. This book, which was dedicated to the governor of Canada, was first issued from the press in 1784.

The beginnings of Canadian literature were, indeed, modest but sincere. While the country was in a formative condition, and the horizon of a comfortable civilization yet afar off, neither the men nor women of Canada had much time to build sonnets, plan novels, or chronicle the stirring deeds of each patriot pioneer. The epic man found, in laying the forest giants low, the drama in the passionate welfare of his family, and the lyric in the smiles and tears of her who rocked and watched far into the night the tender and fragile flower that blossomed from their union and love.

But even the twilight days of civilization and settlement in our great Northland were not without the cheering promise of a literature indigenous and strong, in which can