

in the Paris University, into favorable notice among English students, but that little handbook in itself would scarcely prepare them for so admirable a work from the same sources as "A Political History of Contemporary Europe Since 1814," and quite the best thing of its kind that has been done. It will be remembered that Mr. Fyffe's large History of Modern Europe, brilliant but by no means altogether satisfactory, opened with the outbreak of the French Revolutionary Wars. M. Seignobos starts with the great Congress of Vienna, which met in 1814-15, to restore the balance of power in Europe. Mr. Fyffe took each general movement in succession. M. Seignobos divides his narrative into local spheres, covering the whole area of the continent. He first takes the domestic policy of each country separately, and, after going through the whole series in this way, he next recounts the general movements, the changes in the conditions of political life, the history of the relations between Church and State, and of such revolutionary forces as socialism and anarchy. Lastly, he devotes a section to the international relations of the different countries, arranged in four periods. The book is not what would be called literary; there is no descriptive writing, no characterization of individuals, and, of course, no military events have a place in the scheme. But it is a history of painstaking exactitude and extreme usefulness (2 vols., 20s. net).

LITERATURE.

Dr. Herbert A. Giles, professor of Chinese in the University of Cambridge, has done a more considerable service than at first sight

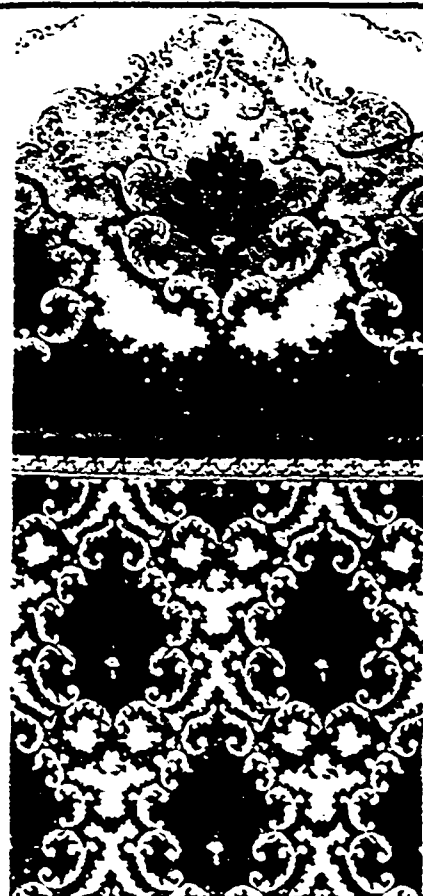
appears, by his "History of Chinese Literature." Incredible as it seems, when we reflect that Chinese literature was extensive six centuries before the commencement of the Christian era, this is the first time that its history has been tackled in any language. Yet it is not an undertaking that many men, no matter how great their qualifications, would enter upon with a light heart. In the opinion of Dr. Giles, the native scholar is not so well placed for securing a general historical review of the literature of China as is the outsider, for he is too close to it, and in truth may be said to be buried under that of which he would be expected to command a comprehensive view. This is, at least, true as regards such a history for the use of Western readers. A European can see the enormous array of Chinese letters in their relative importance, both as compared among themselves and with those of the Western world. In addition to that he brings a more highly systematized method to bear upon the work. We can scarcely appreciate the amount of study and labor which have preceded the accomplishment of this volume, but they must have been out of all proportion to its modest size. No better historian and exponent can be wished, and, although the ground to which he introduces his readers will be new to the majority of them, to him it is familiar from frequent traverse. Where possible, Dr. Giles judiciously lets the subject tell its own tale, and the book contains a large number of examples in prose and verse, most of which are his own translations. A literary period is described, and then specimens are

given. Dr. Giles is always there with his aid when we need it, but he never thrusts himself upon the scene. Special importance should be attached to the appearance of the book at the present time when we require all possible light upon the inner workings of the Chinese mind (6s.). Mr. Rowland E. Prothero's and Mr. E. Hartley Coleridge's edition of Byron's works, in 12 volumes (6s. per vol.), is making good headway. Volume 5 of the Letters and Journals, lately published, cover the period (April 1820-October 1821) of the remainder of his residence in the Palazzo Guiccioli at Ravenna, and the commencement of his stay in the Palazzo Lanfranchi at Pisa. It was an exciting time in Italy and for Byron, as between these dates the Italian Revolution was enacted and also the separation, by Papal decree, of Count and Countess Guiccioli. As showing the fullness of this edition, of the 183 letters included in the present volume, all belonging to the period named, 68 were unknown to Halleck, whose collection has hitherto been the most complete.

Mr. Bernard Shaw is again in evidence, this time with a triad of plays. "Three Plays for Puritans" contains The Devil's Disciple, Caesar and Cleopatra, and Captain Brassbound's Conversion. Described in few words, they are an odd mixture of originality, paradox, shrewdness, egotism, and impudence. The last of these is never so pronounced as when he confronts Shakespeare with Mr. Bernard Shaw (6s.).

FICTION.

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