

don't know as it was wicked," "Did I speak *cross*?" "She sang as *merry* as a lark." Perhaps this phraseology may be held to have a peculiar beauty in American eyes, which may also look down on us as captious for objecting to the sentence, "By the time we reach the restaurant we *will* be ravenous." Then the expression that a person could not hear her *own ears* may be idiomatic, but strikes us as more quaint than forcible, and the description of a picture of a "pretty *wood* interior" leaves us entirely in the dark as to what the subject of the picture was. It might be the recesses of a forest, or the inside of a frame-house, or, stay, a section of pine log would suit as well. The question further suggests itself whether all American ladies, married or unmarried, are called "Madame" in common parlance, and our ignorance of the conventionalities of life in New York must excuse us for asking whether it is usual for young unmarried gentlemen to take their unmarried lady friends of the highest respectability for walks and drives alone in the Central Park, and to treat them to breakfast or dinner at a restaurant?

Certainly, if a British novelist wrote such things, or depicted an American hero so much a snob as to draw a sketch of a young lady he hardly knows, while in church, and on coming out to accost her, show her the drawing, and say he has been watching her for three-quarters of an hour, we fancy that British novelist would "with a blush retire" before his reviewers of the Broadway. Or if he depicted, as Mrs. Duncan does, a literary blue-stocking appealing in utter ignorance for information as to "who the *Mater Dolorosa* was?" the unfortunate man would sink, deservedly, to the rank of a caricaturist.

In the course of the tale Lucia pays several visits to Ottawa, and gives entrancing accounts of fancy-dress balls at the Governor-General's, and other intensely interesting events of a kindred nature. Over this masquerade Mrs. Duncan waxes poetical to the verge of vagueness. After trying several times we gave up the vain attempt at extracting any meaning from this pen portrait of one of the characters; perhaps our readers may have better luck: "A French peasant girl, not in sabots and Jewish hair, but as she was in her apotheosis when Eugénie transfigured her in those last days of her personal empire, ere she discarded forever the girl dress even in a masquerade." *Jewish hair*? — *personal* empire, as opposed to what other kind of empire? Our reason totters and we give it up.

As a finishing touch to our perplexity, we are almost driven to doubt whether, after all the descriptions of the Ottawa River, Government buildings, &c., which our authoress gives us, she has ever been in Canada at all. How else can we explain the astounding assertion made on p. 62, that the Unsophisticated was easily

known as an American, on account of the stupid mistakes she made about the Canadian money. Are we dreaming, or is it not a fact that the decimal coinage of dollars and cents is common to both sides of the St. Lawrence? Could Lucia be so very unsophisticated as to think we still clung to the old pounds currency? or how else can her mistake be explained, for her shopping can have hardly been large enough for her to be puzzled over the difference in purchasing power between a dollar in greenbacks and a Canadian dollar. All we can do is to dismiss Mrs. Duncan and her book, with strict injunctions to do better next time, which, judging from the liveliness of her descriptive powers as shown in several of the passages, she ought to find no impossible task. In particular, the pictures of farm life round Ottawa, with the startling contrast between the *modus vivendi* of the Lower Canadian French settler and the strict Scotch Presbyterian, are remarkably well adapted to convey a good idea of Canada to readers across the border. Mrs. Duncan's book will probably find plenty of readers in the Dominion as well, and we hope the pecuniary results will be such as to dispel all lingering doubts in her mind as to the nature of Canadian currency.

RENEE AND FRANZ. By Gustave Haller. Collection of Foreign Authors, No. 7. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1878.

We have often thought that the expression "Platonic love" should bear the blame for the general incredulity that exists as to the very existence of the state of feeling which those words are supposed to indicate. It is an unhappy phrase, expressive of an amphibious nature, standing "one foot on land, and one on sea," half owning allegiance to Dan Cupid, and the other half to the ancient philosopher and his scholastic disciples. And these conflicting interests, like the unmatched horse of the desert and patient steer, evilly yoked together, do generally end by jerking the persons who experience their struggles into some more or less miry ditch. At least, that is the fate we have generally found in store for the fictitious characters whose authors have led them a dance after that will-o'-the-wisp, Platonic affection.

But why should this be so in real life? As we advance farther from the stage of the oriental despot, with his harem of caged slave-wives, may we not expect to find more and more real friendship and to experience more kinmanship of soul between man and woman, apart from any thought or desire of marriage? As soon as the sexes are more evenly educated, and the avenues to learning, and to that practical use of learning which is its end, are thrown open to all comers, it stands to reason that a man's