

stage rendered scenery impracticable, so that the fact that he made no attempt to introduce it cannot possibly be considered as implying a deliberate rejection of its aid. We cannot, except for the gratification of a momentary antiquarian curiosity, revert to the physical, any more than to the social or intellectual, conditions of the Elizabethan stage; therefore all we can do is to apply to the Elizabethan repertory our existing methods of scenic illustration, adapting them one to the other with all the ingenuity, taste, and discretion we can command.

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Recent Fiction.*

"LESBIA" is a much stronger story than its unsuggestive title would lead one to suppose. Indeed, in many respects it is worthy a more extended notice than we can give. The first part is not particularly striking; it introduces all the personages in the piece, gives us an insight into what manner of persons they are, but gives little intimation of the complications afterwards to arise. In the second part, however, the author more conspicuously exhibits her power; and the interest increases with each succeeding chapter to the end. The story turns on the apparently ill-assorted marriage of a man of good sense, high principle, and strong feeling to a beautiful, self-loving woman, with little sense or principle, or capacity to appreciate the fine qualities of her husband. Some of the scenes are highly dramatic and the reader scarcely knows—cannot know how the play will develop itself; but when the curtain drops it is not on a domestic tragedy, as he feared, but on a scene of reconciliation and hopefulness. The author writes well and makes her people speak well. Her boys and girls talk rather too much like grown-up men and women. Some of the sayings throughout the book are almost aphoristic in terseness, and we venture to quote a few: "A father may, or may not, have money to leave his children, but it is the mother who bequeaths them memories." "When a woman not particularly intellectual is abstracted, it is safe to assume that a person, not an idea, is possessing her thoughts." "In the intimacy of marriage there is room only for two simple elements—attraction or repulsion." "Brides are queens, wives are subjects; bride-grooms are devotees, husbands are infidels." "A conventional conscience is better than none." "Good taste and conventionality are effective auxiliaries to the Ten Commandments." "Hypocrisy is sometimes the only rag of decency a poor body has left." "If you can't make a man sorry, it is something to cause him to swear." "Some women have the ways and manners of those who put up with things, others of those who ordain them."

BRIEFER NOTICES.

"A Voyage to Viking-Land." By Thomas Sedgwick Steele. Boston: Estes & Lauriat. This is a book of travel affording an account of a trip by steamer round the coasts of Norway. It possesses no particular literary merit; but is interesting reading inasmuch as it refers to romantic places and peoples but partially known to us. The volume is issued in an attractive style and is most beautifully illustrated.

Popular Science Lectures. By Ernst Mach. Translated by Thomas J. McCormack. (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company.)—Mr. McCormack's translation of the scientific lectures of Professor Ernst Mach, of Vienna, issued as they are in the present volume, in a cheap but attractive form, will give many an opportunity of studying one whom perhaps they never heard even mentioned before. To the lovers of science, and, indeed, to all thinking men, the book contains much of interest, logically developed and well illustrated, embracing lectures of a philosophical as well as of a scientific nature.

Heartsease Hymns and Other Verses. By William P. McKenzie. (Toronto: William Tyrrell & Co.)—This little volume of hymns is divided into four sections commencing

* "Lesbia." By Anna C. Steele. London: George Bell & Sons. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd.

with "Heartsease Hymns," and ending with "Thoughts of a Man." From "Das Liebe Jesulein," Luther's term, we cull the following:

"Behold him silent, after play and laughter,
While dreamy eyes
Seem fixed on visions of the far hereafter,
And thoughts arise."

Amongst the other hymns, all of them fervent and some of them with the true lyric ring, we would call special attention to the "Samaritan" and the "Pathfinder."

Our Humour. By Richard Shelburn. (New York: Columbian Book Company, 725 Broadway.)—Mr. Shelburn's book deserves little notice. As a work of the publisher's art it is all right, but as giving examples of what Americans consider humour we trust sincerely it is all wrong. Of newspaper wit there is plenty, and not the choicest of that. One could almost wish that Mr. Shelburn had favoured us with a preface to say what he really means by gathering together such a compendium of newspaper jokes; whether his work is really a satire on the wit of the day, or what it is. We give it up; but perhaps some day he will enlighten the public regarding the motive which prompted him to amass together jokes and witticisms which the cultured American would not be apt to consider samples of national humour.

Literary Landmarks of Venice. By G. Laurence Hutton. (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—In this volume Mr. Hutton has done for Venice what, in previous volumes, he had done for Jerusalem, for London, and for Edinburgh; and it is needless to say that he has done his work admirably. It is a little book of only 71 pages, including an index of places as well as an index of persons; but it is full of that peculiar information so "dear to the lovers of book-men and to the lovers of books." One is apt to be a little surprised at the number of people familiar and famous in literature who, at one time or another, lived and wrote and, in some instances, died in Venice; although "Venice, with all her literature, has brought forth but few literary men of her own," as Mr. Hutton observes. The book is beautifully bound and exquisitely illustrated; and is a literary and artistic treat.

Cartier and Hochelaga. Maisonneuve and Ville-Marie. Two historic poems of Montreal. By Walter Norton Evans. (Montreal: W. Drysdale & Co., 232 St. James Street.)—Mr. Evans introduces his historical poem boldly.

"Long had the dying spirit of the Past
Held men in chains; and all the listless world
Looked backward, to behold its golden age."

The new world and the new hopes lie before and in "the mighty river of her dreams." France finds a road to that New France which is not the Old. The poem generally, and "The Landing" in particular, speaks of Scott. But Mr. Evans is no plagiarist; his heart is in his subject, and the energy and vitality which ring in his verses are all his own. Canadians should read these poems with interest; every page is replete with historic associations—the associations of race hatred, national triumph, and—let us not forget this—the charm of the lost cause.

My Neighbours. By Margaret E. Sangster. (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—Mrs. Sangster has long been known as a contributor of both prose and verse to American periodicals. Though almost always didactic she is never tiresome; her subjects are well chosen and she treats them with a practical good sense and a clearness of expression that are her most marked literary characteristics. "These bits of talks on homely themes," as the author modestly calls them, "address themselves only to a fireside audience, and aim only to be helpful to those who face 'the common days, the level stretches white with dust.'" Originally printed as contributions to periodicals, they are now collected in a little volume, tastefully bound, with gilt top and uncut edges. Among the titles, and there are sixty-five in a book of some two hundred and fifty pages, are such suggestive ones as "Tuckered Out," "Planning for Pleasure," "Society Girls," "Sunday Reading," "Wedding-bells," "Women in Public Life," "An Attractive Manner," "The Use of the Word 'Lady,'" "Overdoing in Kindness," etc., etc. There are only three poems, which have been included by request.