

sketch of one of the most interesting and famous movements in the annals of Reform, and written with the frankness, freedom, heartiness and womanly sympathy and skill characteristic of the author, it cannot fail to be, as we have said, a *remarkable* work—remarkable for what it says, and quite as remarkable for the manner in which it is said.

Our space forbids other than a brief and general notice of it; and we regret this the less because the press has so widely and generously paid its respects to the work. It is sure of a host of interested and appreciative readers and even the critic feels no disposition to criticise a book "written by order," and written for a noble cause, and by a woman whose whole heart and soul is consecrated to so divine a work as that to which she has given her life.

Mrs. Willard takes her reader into her confidence. She writes of herself, her history and work, without any reserve, in a lively, free and easy way, with charming simplicity and brightness. No one can read her book and not feel the contact and inspiration of a grand womanly character and an exalted purpose and aim in life. Such an example ought to inspire in all the women of the land nobility of character, a self-sacrificing spirit and aim in life, and earnest and hearty co-operation in the cause of humanity and religion.

*Funk & Wagnalls.*—"The Life-Work of the Author of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,'" by Florine Thayer McCray, author of "Environment," etc. Since the family "biography" of Mrs. Stowe has just appeared, it is but simple justice to the author and publishers of this work to state the following facts: More than two years ago the preparation of this work was proposed to Mrs. McCray, a friend and near neighbor of Mrs. Stowe. But her feeling of delicacy led her to consult Mrs. S. and her son, the Rev. Charles E. Stowe, before consenting to accept the publisher's offer. After stating frankly to them the design of the work and asking permission, both of them gave her a cordial and full written authorization, with the promise of assistance in the work. Mr. Stowe's letter (which we have personally seen, a copy of which is given in Mrs. McCray's Preface), is of the most explicit and absolute character, both in the matter of permission and promise of aid.

Thus encouraged and fortified the author began her work, and spent two years upon the task, with the conviction that she had the cordial approval of the Stowe family, and that her modest work would but be the herald of the "Biography" (which it was then said by Mr. Stowe would not appear until after his mother's death), and from its character would naturally create a desire for it, particularly on the part of the younger portion of the reading public.

It is unfortunate that, by a subsequent change of purpose on Mr. Stowe's part, the two works should appear *simultaneously*. But we are certain that Mrs. McCray has not deviated from her

original plan, which had the approval and god-speed of Mr. Stowe, either as to the time of its publication or the staple of her work. She has acted throughout, we believe, with integrity and strict honor. And if she and her book are made to suffer for the above reason, and friction and bad feeling are engendered, the blame cannot be fairly attributed to her. She has acted consistently and in good faith.

But even as it is—but for the misapprehension of the public, misled by false statements, which have been industriously circulated, and by criticisms of the press based upon ignorance of the facts of the case which enter into the history of Mrs. McCray's work—there need be no conflict or rivalry. The formal biography, although showing undue haste in preparation, every admirer of America's greatest fiction writer will want to possess. The other, written with the full sanction of the parties interested, and in the spirit of intense and intelligent admiration of Mrs. Stowe's gifts and literary productions, and with the view of imparting some of her own admiration and enthusiasm to her young sisters, deserves the candid and un-biased judgment of the reading public. It is a misnomer to call Mrs. McCray's literary sketch a "biography." It does not trench on Mr. Stowe's book. Its main purpose is essentially different. It is projected along another line. It is made up of other materials. The one supplies what the other lacks. No one can rise from the reading of "The Life-Work of the Author of Uncle Tom's Cabin," without a better knowledge and a higher appreciation of Mrs. Stowe's literary being and work. It cannot fail to be a "pecuniary" advantage to Mr. S. and his publishers, if they and the critics do not create an antagonism, for which there is no cause. "The Life-Work" has faults of style, and faults in typography, for which the proof-reader ought to be consigned to the pillory; but it is the conscientious and painstaking labor of a high-minded and cultured lady, who is trusted and beloved by all who know her, and her work does credit to her head and heart.

*Houghton, Mifflin & Co.*—"The Lily Among Thorns: A Study of the Biblical Drama entitled, The Song of Songs." By William Elliott Griffis. The author adopts, in his interpretation of the song, the ancient theory "that the Canticle is a cantata or series of songs making a dramatic unity, celebrating the triumph of virtue over temptation, and illustrating the contrast between virtuous and sensual love, praising the former, and stigmatizing the latter." Dr. Griffis stoutly maintains its inspiration, while he holds that Solomon is not the author of it. He thinks it the most perfect poem in any language—a stainlessly chaste love-poem. The historical and critical part of the book prepares the way for the poem itself. It is a scholarly, fresh and original production which sheds new light on this book of the Bible, and invests it with a higher order of interest.