

## NEW BOOKS REVIEWED.

The next best thing to the reading of a good book is, perhaps, the perusal of an intelligent review of it—to me it is always a source of lively satisfaction.—Gladstone.

### BUSCH'S BIOGRAPHY OF BISMARCK.

**B**ISMARCK, SOME SECRET PAGES OF HIS HISTORY.—By Dr. Moritz Busch. Two volumes, 550 pp. each, six illus., \$7.50. Copp, Clark Co., Limited, Toronto. No more absorbing biography has appeared in recent years than this. It contains really "secret" pages in the political career of the famous German Chancellor, not secret in the sense of vulgar sensationalism, but revealing many of the Chancellor's actual opinions, motive springs of action, and candid sentiments regarding the monarchs and the men with whom he cooperated for the creation of the German Empire.

Dr. Busch is that terror of modern society—the man who keeps a diary. He had, during many years, the closest official and personal intercourse with Prince Bismarck. Possessing remarkable powers of memory, he was accustomed to write down with substantial accuracy, after leaving Bismarck's presence, reports of long conversations held with the great man. The hasty expressions of an angry man, the talk round a dinner table, the statesman's frank avowal of the motives that inspired him—all these get into print, not, apparently, without Bismarck's full knowledge that "after my death little Busch will tell it all." The Prince, in fact, authorizes his admirer to let posterity into the secrets of his career.

The revelations, in consequence, are sometimes astounding, occasionally very indiscreet, at every stage intensely interesting. Any man who thinks he knows the politics of European states during the past 30 years will find, after reading these volumes, that he but dimly discerned what is here told with amplitude of detail and the authority of personal knowledge. It may, therefore, be said by those who have to speak to Canadian readers of this biography that is, to use a commonplace but necessary word, simply indispensable to anyone who conceives himself to be well-informed. No book since Boswell's immortal "Life of Samuel Johnson" constitutes a more perfect revelation of character. It may lack the literary grace of Froude's "Carlyle," or Lockhart's "Scott," but its power, as a delineation of a statesman, who, next to Napoleon, presents the most heroic figure of the century, is inferior to neither of these biographies.

In the first volume, Dr. Busch incorporates a great deal of his book about Bis-

marck, published many years ago, during the statesman's life, by his authority and permission—in fact, the Prince secretly read and corrected the proofs. But, this time, the portions then omitted are included, and, therefore, Bismarck's astonishingly free criticisms of his imperial sovereigns—Emperor William, Empress Augusta, Emperor Frederick, Empress Frederick ("the Englishwoman," as he calls her)—are given without reserve. Many episodes, which simply could not be told then with safety to anyone, are now given publicly. It would be useless to particularize, because this review is merely a brief general survey of the nature of the book, and is in no sense an adequate summary or indication of the contents. For reasons given, Busch drifted apart from Bismarck for a few years. The Prince had heard that the diary, known to be in existence, was to be published. This would have ruined the Chancellor. Busch took his pension and retired from the Imperial service. He regained Bismarck's confidence and personal regard by showing him the proofs of the intended publication. From this period (1873), the author's intercourse with Bismarck down to the time of the latter's death was close and friendly, as he carried out the Chancellor's wishes in many articles written for the non-official German press.

All the events of Bismarck's disagreement with the present Emperor, and the old Chancellor's enforced retirement, are related in the shape of conversations between Bismarck and the author, copies of documents, etc. The concluding chapters are full of interest: The ex-Chancellor's chagrin at his downfall, his indiscreet confidences to indiscreet friends, his home life at Friedrichsruh, his attempts to compose his memoirs (which, one infers, will not likely see the light), and the gradual decline of physical and mental powers. This portion is a chronicle of facts, the author leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions, discourses not at all of German politics, but makes, as indeed at every stage of the narrative, the old Chancellor the central figure and point of interest. To indicate even generally the scope of this volume is, therefore, inexpedient. The reader must have the book in his own hands, must, himself, weigh and compare its contents with what is publicly known of German affairs, from 1890 to 1893, and accept Dr. Busch's presentation of this historical episode as a valuable contribution to our

knowledge of the period, and a striking and vivid narrative of the declining days of the famous Bismarck.

**JOHN BRIGHT.**—By C. A. Vince, M.A. Cloth, 246 pp., 2s. 6d. Copp, Clark Co., Limited, Toronto. This is another of the Victorian Era series, and interesting to read, like all the others. Indeed, it is not often a more cheap, practical and readable series of books comes from the press. John Bright's career is treated, not in a vein of senseless eulogy, but of discriminating and respectful sympathy. As a "study" in contemporary biography, therefore, the book is suited to student, teacher and ordinary reader.

**THE WIDOWER.**—By W. E. Norris. Paper 50c.; The Toronto News Co., Toronto. This is as good a novel as Mr. Norris ever wrote, and many have come from his pen. The easy good humored narrative, which never grows sensational and never drops into twaddle is the characteristic of this writer. Mr. Pennant, whose widowship is not disturbed by any second marriage (much to the author's approval), enters English politics and attains a high place. His charming, wayward daughter, Cuckoo, is rather too much for his philosophy and social experience, and, on her discovering that she is only an adopted daughter with no especial claim for forgiveness for several mishaps, she runs away. Mr. Pennant's nephew and heir, Fitzroy, whom Cuckoo has driven away to an uncongenial engagement of marriage, goes after and rescues her. There is gossip and a broken engagement, but Cuckoo and Fitzroy are happy, and what reader desires more?

**THE TRESPASSER.**—By Gilbert Parker. Cloth, \$1.25; 275 pp. The Copp, Clark Co., Toronto. This is a reissue of a popular book by Mr. Parker. It relates the romantic adventures of Gaston Belward, the scion of an English family, in Canada and England. Gaston is a strange combination, and his experiences were varied. The book is attractive as a story from its very sensationalism, though Mr. Parker's best work is not in it.

**THE LUST OF HATE.**—By Guy Boothby. Paper, 50c.; the Toronto News Co., Toronto. The author again brings on the scene that uncanny personage, Dr. Nikola who, this time, appears in a highly diverting if shocking light. A young Englishman, who learns of a gold mine from a dying comrade, is robbed of it by a man who has stolen the secret. He desires to kill the despoiler of his luck, and, coming across Nikola, is hypnotized and made to believe that he