

As you are richest in this world's goods ;  
But if my candidate will easemy pain,  
To him the opposing man shall yield in votes,  
Unless he gives me up two last year's notes "

These verses may leave me open to the  
imputation of placing old wine in new bottles  
but I frankly acknowledge the source of the  
supply.

Yours, etc.,

G. N. BEAUMONT.

### FIVE LOVE-LETTERS.\*

Is there any one who has not heard of Marianna Alcoforado, of Beja, in the province of Alemtejo, in Portugal? And yet it is wonderful that any one to-day should have heard of her, for she lived three hundred years ago, in a little convent, in an unnoteworthy town, in which she attained no distinction; and her only claim to the attention of posterity lies in the existence of five short letters addressed to a French cavalry officer of the name of Noel Bouton, Comte de Chamilly. But what letters! There is perhaps no more signal proof of the instinct of humanity to recognize the beautiful, the good, and the true than the preservation of this little packet of letters written by this love-lorn nun of twenty-seven to this dashing officer of thirty-one.

"What," was once asked by one who knew nothing of them, "is the secret of their preservation?" "Their genuineness," was the reply; and perhaps to this might have been added the depth of the emotions that were so genuinely expressed and the keenness with which they were so all unconsciously analysed. She spoke out her whole loving heart, did poor Marianna, and few things interest man more than the heart of man.

She was beautiful, she was brave; and both were young. So the old, old story followed. Conventual walls could not separate them, nor did conventual rules prevent them. And the old story had its too frequent ending: he wooed and won, and when he had won, she was left to mourn, and to her mournings she gave vent in these five passionate letters in which she yet once again bared all her feminine charms and weaknesses. "What!" she tells him, "is this the reward you give me for loving you so tenderly? But it matters not; I am resolved to adore you all my life and to care for no one else. . . . Could you ever content yourself with a love colder than mine? You will perhaps find more beauty elsewhere (yet you told me once that I was very beautiful), but you will never find so much love: and all the rest is nothing."

Perhaps the most curious part of the preservation of these letters is that the originals are lost. There actually does not exist a copy of the Portuguese letters as their writer penned them, but only a French translation, which a Portuguese literary expert declares from internal evidence to be a poor translation. Be this as it may, they have been published again and again, and commented on, and studied times without number—as indeed they deserved to be.

The latest translation is that by Mr. Edgar Prestage. From a purely typographical point of view, Mr. Prestage's book leaves nothing to be desired; the type and manner of printing adopted by Messrs. T. and A. Constable, printers to Her Majesty,

\* The Letters of a Portuguese Nun (Marianna Alcoforado), translated by Edgar Prestage, Balliol College, Oxford. London: Published by David Nutt, in the Strand; 1893. Cloth 8vo, rough edges, gilt top, pp. xvi, (inc. 2 blank), 209. Price 7s. 6d.

are beautiful: the pages are a delight to the eye. But from a literary point of view, Mr. Prestage's book leaves almost everything to be desired. The page of *Errata* contains no less than eighteen corrections (in some two-hundred small octavo pages amply spaced and leaded), and even this does not include them all; for on page 102, line 2, we find the phrase "what would have become of me" unnoticed. When all these are corrected by the possessor's pencil, the Messrs. Constable's pages are sadly disfigured. Worst of all, sixteen if not seventeen out of the eighteen errors are other than printer's errors. When every aspect of the book—the carefully used old-fashioned long s; the red-ink figured initial letters; the punctilious retention of the spelling and abbreviations of the original French translation—such as *u* for *v*, & for *and*, *ē* for *en*; and the exceeding care bestowed on the minutest typographical points—show that no effort seems to have been spared to make the book bibliopically perfect, it certainly looks as if the translator had strained at a gnat and swallowed several camels. His translation halts not seldom. His opening sentence is ambiguous, for unless one knows that the thing apostrophised was "*mon amour*" and not *mon amant* (or *mon cher*), one would be apt wrongly to interpret "Do but think, my love, how much thou wert wanting in foresight." Some idea of the slips into which Mr. Prestage falls may be seen from the fact that wherever "*les Religieuses*" occurs in the original, instead of translating it simply by "nuns," he says "religious;" as, for example, "I have exposed myself to the anger of my parents, to all the severity of the laws of this country against religious" (*J'ay perdu ma reputation, je me suis exposée à la fureur de mes parens, à la severité des lois de ce Pais contre les Religieuses*,—p. 73, 11. 15 et seq.); and "The religious must be as mad as myself," (*Et il faut que les Religieuses soient aussi insensées que moy*,—p. 84, 11. 19 et seq.), and "Some religious who know the deplorable state" (*quelques Religieuses, qui savent l'estat deplorable*,—p. 87, 11. 16 et seq.)

A certain section of the book—heralded by a bastard title on an otherwise blank page of beautiful paper, titled in treble spaced unpunctuated crimson letters, and supplemented by small-capital marginal headings—is a so-called "Bibliography," wherein one finds only three works which had not already been mentioned by Senhor Cordeiro. Surely an exhaustive bibliography, one which even mentioned good articles on the subject—and there have been some notable ones, e.g., Mr. Edmund Gosse's in the *Fortnightly Review* (Vol. XLIX., page 506), and Senhor Emilio Pardo Bazán's in the *España Moderna* of June, 1889, entitled "*La Eloisa Portuguesa*" (though it is fair to say this latter is referred to in the text)—would not have been too much to ask of the maker of a seven-and-six-penny book in this era of libraries and book-manuals; especially as such bibliography would have been intensely interesting: edition after edition of the letters came out, even in the lifetime of the writer and of the receiver; numerous have been the spurious editions, the replies, and the imitations.

The best thing in Mr. Prestage's little work is the reprint in full of the first French edition of 1669, which he tells us was "copied in Paris purposely for this work," and which certainly, in his own words, "adds much [one might say 'everything'] to its interest and value." If the

translator will fill up the deficiencies pointed out, a second edition of this book would be worth buying.

ARNOLD HAULTAIN.

### EARLY COUNSEL.

(E. A. S. 1883.)

"Of men and things, serenely speak,"  
He said, half smiling, "if you seek  
An easy life, for you must live  
With men and things—who don't forgive."

'Unhappy is the poet's lot,  
Entangled in cheap tricks of thought;  
Earth's goods and baggage chiefly please:  
Be a philosopher—with these.

"The soul frets that the body bars  
Its feet a pathway to the stars;  
Albeit choose some drudgery too,  
And sweat, as 'honest people' do.

"Earth's but a trivial item, sec,  
Mapped in the spirit's destiny;  
This smoke and toil perhaps, designed  
As calisthenics for the mind."

EZRA H. STAFFORD.

Toronto.

### ART NOTES.

John Sargent and Frank Bramley, painter, and George Crompton, sculptor, have been elected associates of the Royal Academy.

At her studio, 8 North street, Miss Mason has, during the past two weeks, given an exhibition of her work in china painting. Great interest has been shown and the number of visitors was large, a just tribute to the quality of the work exhibited. We regret inability to speak from personal inspection, but from all we have heard of Miss Mason's work we judge it that of a true artist.

The winter exhibition of the Palette Club opens on Saturday, Jan. 20th, at Mr. Robert's art gallery, 79 King street west, which has been much improved of late, especially in the matter of lighting. A larger number of artists than heretofore are contributing, and some work from Montreal is expected. One of the largest canvases, from the brush of an artist who speaks to the hearts of the uninitiated as well as to the more critical tastes of others, is the "Modern Madonna."

The London *Spectator* tells us, that Mr. Burne Jones, who has been recently discovered by French connoisseurs, has already made a decided impression upon Parisian opinion. The interest which his pictures have excited in the French capital is well expressed in the current number of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, which contains an intelligent and eulogistic article on his pictorial treatment of the legend of Perseus. As illustrations to the article, several of Mr. Burne Jones's sketches have been reproduced.

If any reader of Mrs. Burton Harrison's clever story "Sweet Bells out of Tune" has wondered whether reference was made to any particular artist, when one of the characters says of him: "If that man had painted Dr. Jekyll, people would have been sure to see in it the monster Hyde. They say he employs a little somebody with horns to come up through a trap door and paint his eyes for him." The frankness of these is positively brutal. If anyone has wondered, we say, a writer in the *Art Amateur* has solved the riddle. It is John S. Sargent.

The desire of the female students in the Royal Academy Schools, London, to be allowed the same chance of complete study as is given to the male students is made more significant by the results of the recent competition. It appears that both the silver medals for painting the head from life were taken by ladies, and the prize for a cartoon of a draped figure as well. They argue, not unreasonably, that if with the limited opportunities at present open to them they can do so much, greater facilities for study would bring the more substantial rewards which the Academy has to offer well within their reach.