

Library Table.

THE STORY OF PORTUS AND SONGS OF THE SOUTHLAND. By Mary H. Lemard. Buffalo: Ch. W. Moulton. 1894. Price \$1.00.

The story of Portus is the story of a negro captive of royal birth, who lived happily in a Southern family before and during the war. It is very well told, with excellent sympathies, appreciating the difficulties of the South, yet not justifying slavery. The only question with us is, whether the story could not have been told better in prose. The metre is so very rugged and uneven that it is difficult to say how many feet there are in a line and what they are intended to be.

NORSELAND TALES. By Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Toronto: William Briggs. 1894. \$1.25.

Professor Boyesen has again favored us with a volume of Norwegian stories, some of which have already appeared in the *Youth's Companion* and *Harper's Young People*. We venture to say that no juvenile reader of the stirring tale "Zuleika," in which the pluck and dash of brave Claude Ring wins for him the splendid Arab mare of that name, will hesitate for a moment in reading the remaining nine stories of this enjoyable volume. The learned professor unbends most charmingly in these bright short stories of his native land and no doubt it is as pleasant for him to write as for others to read them.

THREE BOYS ON AN ELECTRICAL BOAT. By John Trowbridge. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company. 1894. \$1.00.

Mr Trowbridge is an up-to-date story teller; he can not only tell a story, but he can tell it well. The mystery woven round the spirited Hal and his gentle friend Ned, intensifies the interest of the reader who follows their romantic adventures. Runaways from school they are picked up in an open boat off shore by the man-of-war "Electron," on which they intended to ship. Hal's daring rescue of his captain, as told in the tenth chapter, wins for him the admiral's gratitude and his gold watch and is but one of a number of stirring incidents in which he figures. The pursuit of the boys by the villain Stephen, whose schemes had deprived them of a home and relatives, by a happy incident results in their discovery and restoration. The happy ending which all story lovers look for will be found here accompanied by a fine aspiration on the relations which should prevail between England and the United States.

THE ASCENT OF LIFE, or the Psychic Laws and Forces in Nature. By Stinson Jarvis. Boston: Arena Publishing Company. 1894.

Mr. Stinson Jarvis is a decidedly clever man and has given us here a very well written book. The chapters of which it is made up were originally contributed as a series of articles to the *Arena Magazine* in a certain tentative fashion; and are here reproduced with additions contributed by readers. According to the author man's nature is to be further evolved by means of hypnotism. A great many of the facts here adduced in connection with clairvoyance, hypnotism, and mesmerism are of the kind with which we are already familiar; and we are not quite sure that Mr. Jarvis has fathomed the mysteries of religion as deeply as he seems to think, nor do we find much help from the Buddhist theory of the seven elements of which man is said to consist, some of which superfluous and some nonsensical; but there are points in man's spiritual history which are brought out with a considerable power of analysis and description. Here and there we could wish a little better tone in speaking of the great. "The Inferno," says Mr. Jarvis, "in which the spiteful Dante placed his personal enemies, lies unread on our shelves along with Milton's lurid *Belial*." It would not be easy to beat this for inaccuracy and bad taste. Perhaps this is worse: "Many idols have, at times, been more improv-

ing than Yauveh," that is, Jehovah! Mr. Jarvis prefixes his photograph to his volume. He is a very good-looking man.

THE BUTTERFLY HUNTERS IN THE CARIBBEES. By Dr. Eugene Murray-Aaron, F.E.S., F.Z.S.E., etc. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Toronto: William Briggs. 1894. \$2.00.

Dr. Murray has chosen a taking name for this book. It will doubtless attract boy readers as readily as the lure, which was placed by the Sulphur River, did the "gorgeous" and "regal *Homerus*." Within some 270 pages a narrative is given of the trip of two lads "from an inland Pennsylvania town" to some of the West Indian islands, and its incidents and adventures, under the guidance of a traveller in many lands who was also an ardent naturalist. The following quotation is a fair sample of the style and contents of the volume: "While the boys were at lunch that day discussing a trip up the Sulphur River for the afternoon, Ned suddenly sprang from the table with a bound, exclaiming, 'Oh! what a beauty! Doctor, Doctor! what is that magnificent creature?' meanwhile pointing out of the window to a nearby rosebush in full bloom, over which was hovering by far the most superb butterfly they had yet seen. Lazily flitting from rose to rose, its nearly seven inches of broad, velvety black expanse, banded with a great golden dash across both wings, with golden fringes and blue and purple eyelike spots on the hind wings, it presented in the glistening sunlight an appearance that was never to be forgotten. Usually the Doctor was an interested, but entirely calm observer of their very natural enthusiasm, but in this instance their zeal was infectious; for he rushed into the adjoining room and out of the house with his net in his hand, calling 'A *Homerus*! A *Homerus*! One like that is worth fifty dollars, besides being a great credit to the one who can capture it.'

AMONG THE TIBETANS. By Isabella Bird Bishop, F.R.G.S. Toronto, Chicago and New York: Fleming H. Revell Company.

Those who have enjoyed Miss Bird's "Unbeaten Tracks in Japan" will be glad to turn to this short but interesting account of Mrs. Bird Bishop's experiences on the way to and in Tibet. The book contains good illustrations by Edward Whymper, and many fine descriptions of scenery. The dangerous and exciting passage of the swollen Shayok River, the pen portrait of Usman Shah, and the account of Mrs. Bishop's own horse, Gyalpo, are particularly good. This last is worth quoting both for its raciness and also for its revelation of the writer's abundant humor and vitality:—"Gyalpo, my horse, must not be forgotten—indeed he cannot be, for he left the marks of his heels or teeth on every one. He was a beautiful creature, Badakshani bred, of Arab blood, a silver-grey, as light as a greyhound and as strong as a cart-horse. He was higher in the scale of intellect than any horse of my acquaintance. His cleverness at times suggested reasoning power, and his mischievousness a sense of humor. He walked five miles an hour, jumped like a deer, climbed like a yak, was strong and steady in perilous fords, tireless, hardy, hungry, frolicked along ledges and precipices and over crevassed glaciers, was absolutely fearless, and his slender legs and these he made of them was the marvel of all. He was an enigma to the end. He was quite untamable, rejected all dainties with indignation, swung his heels into people's faces when they went near him, ran at them with his teeth, seized unwary passers-by by their kamar bands and shook them as a dog shakes a rat, would let no one go near him but Mando, for whom he formed at first sight a most singular attachment, but kicked and struck with his forefeet, his eyes all the time dancing with fun, so that one could never decide whether his ceaseless pranks were play or vice."

The book concludes with two chapters on the manners and customs of the Tibetans and the climate and natural features of the country. The book is published in England by the Religious Tract Society.

CZAR AND SULTAN. By Archibald Forbes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Toronto: William Briggs. 1894. \$2.

Anything from the graphic pen of Archibald Forbes is sure to be good reading. There are few men living who have seen so much hard fighting as he has and fewer still who can at all approach him in describing what he has seen. Mr. Forbes here purports to narrate the adventures of a British lad in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78. He has availed himself not only of his own personal experiences but of the recorded impressions of the war correspondents, MacGahan and Millett, the History of Captain F. V. Greene of the United States army, of Mr. Nemirowitch-Daulchenko's Reminiscences of Skobelev, Valentine Baker, Pasha's War in Bulgaria and other sources of information. It may well be imagined that not a dull page will be found among the 381 which this stirring volume contains. From the first chapter in which we follow the Russian fortunes across the Pruth until the last which records the signing of the treaty of peace the interest of the story is unflaggingly sustained. Here and there we have brilliant pen pictures of distinguished men. Take for instance this of the gallant and dashing Skobelev: "I looked at Skobelev with all my eyes as he stood there on the garden-path, his fine face glowing with pleasure as he returned the greeting of his old friend. I thought then as a lad, as I have never ceased to think, that I never looked on a grander man. Over six feet in height, straight as a pine, the head carried high with a frank, gallant fearlessness, square across the broad shoulders, deep in the chest, slender in the waist, clean of flank, the muscular, graceful, supple figure set off to perfection by the white frock-coat with the decorations and the gold lace on it, Skobelev, with his chivalrous bearing, looked a genial king of men. . . . No wonder that soldiers, friends and women loved him!—it was impossible to know him, to have him smile on you with that sweet, grave smile of his, and not to love him." Then, as a foil to the dark thread of the story, here and there are bright bits of description. Here is a view by the way en route to the Shipka Pass: "We threaded glen after glen, climbed steep after steep, passed through sweet-lying village after village, all howered in foliage. We rode through thick woods whose dense foliage shaded us from sunrays; by whimpering streams on which were rushing mill-races; and then came the cool splash of the water over the moss-grown water wheel, and the scent of balsam and thyme from the miller's garden fringed by willows whose tresses dipped into the stream. We rode through verdant meadows, our horsehoofs the rich grass; and by fountains from whose carved face sprang a jet of clear, cold water, grateful alike to parched throat and burning temples. We skirted vine-yards where heavy masses of dark green foliage but half screened the clusters of grapes just beginning to soften into ripeness; by orchards over whose fences the plum branches nodded heavy with yellow and purple globes"—and so on. A picture of far different portent is the following taken from the fighting scenes in the Shipka Pass:—"The final crisis was imminent. Colonel Lipinst, gathering about him a few ragged companies of trusty soldiers, rallied them to face the oncoming Turks with feeble, despairing volleys; but their efforts availed but little against the hordes climbing the steep slope to gain the road, give the hand to the co-operating column, cut off the retreat of the Russians and pen them up in their narrow and exposed position. Never to my dying day shall I forget that thrilling hour. As the afternoon shadows were falling, Darozhinsky and Stoliottoff, with Villiers and myself by their side, stood in the Turkish fire on the parapet of the central entrenchment. Along the bare ridge above and below us lay the grimed, sun-blistered men, beaten out with heat, fatigue, hunger and thirst; reckless in their despondency, that every foot of ground was swept by the Turkish rifle-fire. Others still doggedly fought on down among the rocks, forced to give ground but doing so with sullen reluctance. The cliffs and valleys echoed with the triumphant shouts of 'Allah il Allah!' But we must leave our readers to accompany Gourko across the Balkans; to watch intently the tremendous struggle before Plevna, and to share with us the pleasure of this strong