

"The Absentee," written to enforce upon landlords their duty to their tenants, is at the other pole of literary style. Here we are introduced at once to high life or pseudo-high life, for it savours of fashionable vulgarity. An artificial perfume pervades the atmosphere surrounding the characters. True there are relieving features, such as Miss Nugent and Lord Colombe, but analysed ever so slightly they are found to be commonplace, and you long for the society again of honest Thady in the servants' hall. Miss Edgeworth seems to have been entrammelled by the literary and other conventions of her time. It is a proof of her genius that in spite of this she has produced books that have been read with keen relish by generations of young people. "Castle Rackrent" shows that she might have burst those bonds, but somehow she did not, and the promise therein contained of striking in various places the rock basis of Irish peasant character, was destined to be unfulfilled.

Bookland.

WHAT TO READ.

"China, Present and Past," by R. S. Gundry. ("T. P." says in the *Sunday Sun*, "a real glimpse into the life of the strange, mysterious land of China, with its millions, its ancient civilisation and its strange court and ceremonials and people.") (London: Chapman & Hall.)

"Prince Bismarck," by Charles Lowe, M.A. (second vol., Statesman Series). Printed at an opportune moment. (W. H. Allen & Co.)

"Studies of Contemporary Superstition," by W. H. Mallock. (Ward & Downey.)

"Vera Barantsova," by Sophia Kovalevsky, from the Russian by S. Stepniak and W. Westall. (Ward & Downey.)

"The Burden of a Woman," by Richard Pyrc. (A. D. Innes & Co.)

"Some Men are such Gentlemen," by Dr. Arabella Kenealy. (Digby, Long & Co.)

"In Stevenson's Samoa," by Marie Fraser. (Smith, Elder & Co.)

"They call it Love," by F. Frankfort Moore. (Messrs. Hutchinson.)

"The Grasshoppers," by Mrs. Andrew Dean (Mrs. Alfred Sidgwick.) (A. and C. Black.)

"The Story of Ursula," by Mrs. Hugh Bell. (Hutchinson & Co.)

"Transition," by Author of "A Superfluous Woman." (Heinemann.)

The *National Review* for April. "The Choice of Books," by Leslie Stephen.

"Twelve Hundred Miles in a Waggon," by Miss Balfour. It is reported that Iota's novel "Children of Circumstance," will be published immediately in a single volume; it ran through four editions in three volume form.

Messrs. Osgood and McIlvaine are bringing out monthly at 6s. the first uniform and complete edition of Mr. Thomas Hardy's works. "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" is published this week, and contains two etchings by H. Macbeth-Raeburn. These books should be bought and read, not skimmed from the library; no finer novels have ever been written than "Far from the Madding Crowd" and "Two on a Tower."

"The Gods, some Mortals, and Lord Wickenham," is the title of a new novel out this week, by John Oliver Hobbes (Mrs. Craigie).

Miss Margaret Stokes, author of "Six Months in the Apennines," has written a new work of travel describing her pilgrimage in search of vestiges of the Irish saints in France, which Messrs. George Bell and Sons will publish under the title "Three Months in the Forests of France." The book will be fully illustrated.

A collection of catholic poetry by Mrs. William Sharp is announced for publication by Mr. Elkin Mathews.

Encouraged by the great success of "St. Paul's," the directors of St. Paul's Company (Limited), have decided to publish at an early date a new sixpenny weekly illustrated ladies' paper, to be called "Madame."

The Countess Gisele von Streitberg, of Berlin, has just published a pamphlet entitled "German Women and Bismarck Worship," in which she protests against the homage her sex renders to Bismarck.

The largest and most complete medical library in the world is said to be the collection located in the Army Medical Museum, Washington. The library now includes 112,000 bound volumes and about 150,000 pamphlets. It is estimated that this library comprises three-fourths of the medical literature of the world, and at least nine-tenths of the medical literature which has been published within the last ten years.

The London District of the Institute of Journalists held a reception at the Galleries of the Institute of Painters in Water Colours on Saturday night. The company were received by Mr. Alexander Paul, of the *Daily News*, the Chairman of the London District, and Mrs. Paul, and 250 ladies and gentlemen were present.

Stageland.

THE new piece, "La Princesse Lointaine," which has been produced at the Renaissance Theatre in Paris, with Madame Sarah Bernhardt in the title rôle, is not a play for the million, as a four-act play in verse, even containing passages of unusual literary excellence can only be appreciated by an intelligent and refined audience, and full stalls and an empty pit is not "good business."

Madame Albani is to appear in Royal Italian Opera this season. She has not been heard at Covent Garden for two or three years.

The leading lady of Palmer's Company in New York, Miss Julia Arthur, is to appear shortly at the Lyceum.

Mr. Henry Arthur Jones' new play will be produced at the Lyceum under the management of Mr. Forbes Robertson.

Mr. and Mrs. Beerbohm Tree and their Company leave New York on the 17th; they will return in the *Paris*.

It is rumoured that Mr. Thomas Hardy intends to dramatise "Tess." With Mrs. Patrick Campbell in the title rôle success would be assured.

To show the paucity of dramatic talent amongst women, the following paragraph from the *Westminster* concerning our "only actress" is instructive:—

"The future movements of Mrs. Patrick Campbell are creating the liveliest excitement in theatrical circles. Mr. John Hare is anxious to secure her for his tour in America, where she would play in 'The Second Mrs. Tanqueray' and 'The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith'; Mr. Beerbohm Tree very naturally wants her to renew her contract with him, which ends in July; a very tempting offer to appear at the Lyceum has been made by Mr. Forbes-Robertson, who will

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