the death of her mother. Her father, who was dreadfully disgusted by having nothing but dull and plain daughters when he wanted a son and heir, ordered all his girls to be kept away in a distant wing of his house. He never saw them, and they did not even know him by sight. But the lady of quality was an exception to her sisters. She was beautiful; and she had a terrible temper, that matched her sporting father's. Moreover, she learnt to ride from the grooms, from whom she also learnt to swear like a trooper. An amusing scene describes the girl's first meeting with her father, when she was about six years of age. She was angry that he had taken her favourite horse out of the stables when she wanted to ride it herself; so the little vixen made for her father, thrashed him with all her baby strength, and swore at him in great, round oaths. This was the best way to capture her father's affections, and from that day he made the child his boon companion, took her out hunting, dressed her in fine clothes, and she became the toast of the county, and was adored by all the beer-drinking squires of the neighbourhood. She grew up blazingly beautiful (the adjective is mine, not the authoress's), and, strange to say, possessed of a perfectly phenomenal amount of sense, wit, and attraction. After a while she abandons her boy's clothes (in which she was accustomed to hunt and dine); and one day a certain fine gentleman comes upon the scenes. His presence and his connection with the Lady of Quality is somewhat mysteriously treated. On the surface she treats him with disdain; but one night her sister, Anne, sees him stealing through the garden, and the reader becomes suspicious that there is a closer relationship between Clorinda and the mysterious Sir John Oxon.

In due course of time the Lady of Quality goes to London, and marries an estimable nobleman, to whom, strange to say, she makes an admirable wife in every sense of the word. Then Lord Dunstanwold dies, and his widow falls most desperately in love with his kinsman, the Duke of Osmonde. She becomes engaged to marry him, and all promises well for her happiness, when suddenly Sir John Oxon reappears, and talks most indiscreetly about the past connection between them. He is so tactless that Clorinda becomes seriously annoyed, and, to tell the matter shortly, slays him with her riding whip. Then she hides his body under the drawing-room sofa, and has an afternoon party, during which she is somewhat careful to sit on that particular sofa herself, for fear her guests should discover the body of her ex-lover and friend. After they have all gone she buries the corpse in a disused cellar; and all through the trying afternoon she shows her quality by the brave manner in which she never flinches, and behaves with admirable manners and entertains all her visitors without ever betraying her perturbation of spirit. But that was nothing to what followed. She married her duke, and not only never told him that she had murdered her former lover, but she never repented that murder, but felt she had been a worthy instrument in the hand of Providence in removing such a bad man from the world, for he had betrayed many unfortunate girls beside herself, and gambled and did many other shocking things. Of course I must confess that this is not a quite fair way of relating this remarkable story, but, shorn of the details, and of the truly interesting account of the gradual development of her character and that of her sweet and delightful sister Anne, that is the story.

One of the first observations that will occur to everyone on reading this bald synopsis of this tale is, what has become of Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's sense of humour? Well, to answer that they must read the story for themselves, and then they will find that, in spite of the comic outline that I have given of the story, there is plenty of humour in the telling of it. Moreover, the book itself is exceedingly subtle. There is an aspect in which it can be read and very greatly enjoyed. But I fear that the average British reader will not focus the tale rightly, and will only be shocked, or else make merry over it, without perceiving the really deep and fascinating allegorical significance that lies beneath. When Clorinda's happiness really comes to Clorinda, after all her woes, and she thinks that its consummation will be stopped by the wicked-hearted Baronet, she slays him in a fit of anger, and says to his murdered body: "Ay, mock!" she said, setting her teeth, "thinking I am conquered; yet am I not. 'Twas an honest blow, struck by a creature goaded past all thought. Ay, mock! and yet, but for one man's sake, would I call in those outside and stand before them, crying, 'Here is a villain whom I struck in madness, and he lies dead! I ask not mercy, but only justice.'" Further on she says: "Ah, mock, and thou wilt! But between his high honour and love and me thy carrion SHALL not come."

This last quotation will show the discriminating reader some of the quality of the book. Those capable of appreciating that quality will judge from it what a strange yet powerful fascination the book has, and will duly send for it from the circulating library. I will only add that it is not everybody's book, and very literally-minded people—those who take everything, even their romances, *au pied de la lettre*—will do well to leave it unread.

A. M. G.

Bookland.

WHAT TO READ.

"The Rise of the Dutch Republic," a history, by John Lothrop Motley. New edition in Bohn's Standard Library. With a Biographical Introduction by Moncure D. Conway, vol. I. (George Bell & Sons.)

"The Mameluke or Slave Dynasty of Egypt," by Sir William Muir, K.C.S.I., LL.D., &c. (London: Smith, Elder & Co.)

"My Confidences: an Autobiographical Sketch addressed to my Descendants," by Frederick Locker-Lampson. (London: Smith, Elder & Co.)

"The Second Madame," by M. Louise McLaughlin. (G. A. Putnam's Sons.)

"Armenian Poems," rendered into English verse by Alice Stone Blackwell. (Boston, U.S.A.: Roberts Brothers.)

"Heart of the World," by H. Rider Haggard. (Longmans & Co.)

"He Went Out with the Tide," by Guy Eden. (John Macqueen.)

"Oh, what a Plague is Love," by Mrs. H. A. Hinkson. (A. & C. Black.)

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