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34, Wimpole-st., London W., November, 1906.

DR. VAN DYKE has for the last year and a half been devoting himself to the diseases of the Eye, at the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital, Moorfields. For a year he has acted as his clinical assistant, and he has made himself thoroughly familiar with the methods of correcting errors of refraction with glasses. He is skilled in the use of the ophthalmoscope, and is acquainted with the various changes met with in the fundus of the eye, as well as with the diagnosis and treatment of its external parts. I always found him a reliable and most trustworthy assistant.

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Books and Bookmen

"DISENCHANTED": Translated by Clara Bell. (Macmillan and Co., London.)

An admirable translation of Pierre Loti's "Desenchantees," the subject matter of which the reader will hope to hear more of. It is a pitiful story of the lives lived by Turkish women of rank in harems, of lives whose miseries have been intensified and aggravated ten fold by the high state of culture attained by them of late years. In order to acquire this culture, European governesses, bringing in their train high class literature, have been introduced into the harems to instruct the inmates. With their advent, together with this higher education, has come disillusion, disenchantment, wild longings for liberty, rebellion against the old customs, some of them preferring death to marriage with men they have never seen, whose voices they have never heard. And the last state of the Turkish woman is worse than the first. And to Pierre Loti has come the Mesopotamian cry, "Come over and help us." And in "Desenchantees" he has responded nobly. In the short preface he says:

This is a purely imaginary tale. Any endeavour to find real issues for Djennan, Zeyneb, Melek, or Andre would be waste of time, for they never existed. The only real thing in it is the high level of culture now prevailing in the harems of Turkey, and the suffering which comes of it. This suffering, more striking, perhaps, to my eyes as a foreigner, is already an auxiliary to my dear friends the Turks; and they would fain diminish it. I, of course, do not pretend to have discovered the remedy which profound thinkers there on the spot are still seeking. But I, like them, feel sure that there is one, and that it will be found; for the wonderful Prophet of Islam, who was above all else compact of light and charity, cannot have desired that the rules he dictated of old should become in the lapse of time a cause of suffering.

Now, though the author does not pretend to have found a remedy, it will be plainly understood by the reader that the only real remedy lies in the revision, or abolition, of the laws laid down in the Koran, for the regulating of the marriages of the Faithful. Looked at from which ever point of view those interested in this question may take, the remedy is not an easy one to apply. The Turk, though lethargic enough in ordinary matters, is said to be the most bigoted fanatic in existence on religious matters. But Pierre Loti says that the Turk is anxious that these laws insisting on the absolute seclusion of women and their compulsory marriage, should be altered, and if this be true the Turkish women have it in their own power to bring about their own emancipation. But before great reform can come about, revolution must precede it, and some must die, and some must die. And as the pen is mightier than the sword, this effort of Pierre Loti's may act as the wedge in bringing about their emancipation by a consensus of public opinion. The story opens where Andre Lheroy, a French writer of note, receives a letter from a Turkish lady of rank begging him to help them by writing a book about the monotonous lives and sufferings of the women in Turkish harems. It was written in such faultless French, and with such purity of expression, that at first he was inclined to believe that some European had written it in mockery. But while thinking this he was tempted to answer it, to the great delight and comfort of the Turkish woman Djennan, and her husband, and companions in suffering, Zeyneb and Melek. Three years after, being appointed to the French Embassy in Constantinople, he receives another letter from the trio, making an assignation with him. He accepts the appointment, fully conscious of the terrible risk both he and they run, as in Turkey it is well known that for the Turkish woman who talks with or sees a man not her husband, father, or brother, there are

only two ways open—flight or death. In spite of bolts and bars, and the strict watch kept upon the harems by the Eunuchs, they contrive to meet often, and Andre is posted with material for the book, and as pity is akin to love, from pity for Djennan he falls in love, which love she returns hopelessly. About this time Andre returns to France. Shortly after reaching there, he receives a letter from Zeyneb, telling him that both Djennan and Melek are dead, the one of poison, administered by her own hand, the other of broken heart, both the result of a second compulsory marriage being forced upon them. Zeyneb herself is in the last stage of consumption and welcomes early death as a relief. To Andre Lheroy is left the book, and the waters of Lethe. The denouement is essentially French, as is the dramatic, realistic way in which the book is written. But the book requires to be read in order to be properly appreciated, as though it is realistically written, there is nothing in it to shock the most fastidious. The character of Djennan is splendidly drawn. Capable of the highest culture, womanly in the truest sense of the word, in short, a being to love and be loved, and to be the mother of children, yet refusing the love and liberty offered her by Andre Lheroy, because, according to her own lights, and the laws of her country, she was not morally or legally free to accept. The picture drawn of the Turk proper will come as a revelation to those who hitherto have looked upon the Turk as hopelessly degenerate. According to Pierre Loti (who speaks with intimate knowledge), he is religious, deeply meditative, kind, loyal, one of the noblest people of the world; capable of terrible energy, of sublime heroism in the battlefield, if his native land is threatened or if the cry is Islam or the Faith.

Of the Perote, or native of Pera, on the other side of the Bosphorus, he is not so eulogistic, though. "While agreeing with the Osmanlis as to the Perotes in general, I must admit that there are exceptions to the rule—men of perfect respectability and breeding, women who would be exquisite in any country or any society." He waxes very indignant at the depraved style of the architecture of Pera, and condemns very strongly the aping of European dress and manners. But even in his beloved Stamboul Parisian costume and furnishings are almost general; no inmate of the harem unless she be what is nicknamed a 1320—"The nickname given to anyone who recognises no dates but from the Hegira, instead of using the European calendar," wearing native dress. There is also an interesting description of the reception held by a Turkish bride after the ceremony. She is taken to her husband's house and seated upon a throne. Then the front doors are opened wide and every passer-by in the street may come in and pay homage, or, what is more common, condole with the bride. The customs observed at the Muslim Tent, Ramadan, too, are described; one custom of which might be copied with advantage in the Western Hemisphere, namely, the whole of the Koran, chapter by chapter, must be read during Ramadan. Contrary to our Lent, the days are spent in fasting and sleeping; the nights in feasting and revel. Taken altogether, nearly every preconceived notion of the Turk at home will be upset, and the book laid down reluctantly.

"THE CHRIST IN SHAKESPEARE," by C. Ellis (Bethnal Green Free Lib. 13, Gray, London Street, Bethnal Green, London, N.)

To students of Shakespeare, any interpretation that will throw additional light on passages that are obscure, even

to the most devoted lover of the great master, or throw into higher relief his matchless imagery, will be received with the greatest welcome. The author, speaking, as it were, in defence of this book of interpretations of his, quotes George Wither on interpretation, who, when asked to explain his meaning of some obscure passage in one of his poems, replied, "That to make his meaning clear would be to take away the employment of his interpreter." Any great work, whether it be poetry or prose, must always seem to have more than one meaning, not to the individual, but for the benefit of the many, as each individual interprets it according to his own inward light, and receives, or diffuses knowledge, wisdom, help, comfort, relaxation, according to his interpretation of it. Mr Ellis's motive is to show the connection between the Bible and Shakespeare's works, and he has succeeded admirably. For this purpose he has used the Geneva Bible, the Bible most commonly in use in Shakespeare's time, and has taken for comparison "The Merchant of Venice," Richard 2nd and 3rd, Henry 5th and 6th, "Macbeth" and "Hamlet," "Measure for Measure," and 50 of the sonnets. That Christ was in Shakespeare was abundantly evident. Since "By their works ye shall know them," and surely since Christ there has not lived any greater teacher of all that was Christ-like, or whose ideals for work-a-day use have been so transcendently high. There is abundant testimony in the book from eminent divines, writers, poets, etc., and a reproduction of what is said to be the best portrait extant of Shakespeare, namely, the "Houbraken" engraving of 1747, and the lines written by Ben Jonson on beholding it.

This figure that thou here seest put, It was for gentle Shakespeare cut: Wherein the graver had a stroke With nature to outdo the life. O could he but have drawn his wit As well in Brass, as he has 'till His face; the print would then surpass All that was ever writ in brass; But since he cannot, reader, look Not on his picture, but his book.

There are also facsimiles of several autographs of Shakespeare, which are said to be authentic. The book is worthily bound, and this short, inadequate review may well close with the eulogism of him as a man by Sir Henry Irving in his "Lectures on the Drama."

"The noblest literary man of all time," writes Henry Irving, "the finest and yet most prolific writer of a great student of man, and the greatest master of man's highest gift,—of language—surely it is treason to humanity to speak of such an one as in any sense a common-place being. "Imagine him rather as he must have been, the most notable courtier of the court, the most perfect gentleman who stood in the Elizabethan throng. "The man in whose presence divines would falter and hesitate, lest their knowledge of 'The Book' should seem poor by the side of his, and of whom even queens royally would look askance with an oppressive sense that there was one to whose true imagination the hearts of kings and queens and peoples had always been an open page. "The thought of such a man is an incomparable inheritance for any nation, and such a man was . . . Shakespeare."

DELTA.
†(Sir) Henry Irving, "Lectures on the Drama," (W. Heinemann, 1893).

Royal Needlewomen.

QUEENS WHO COULD MAKE THEIR OWN GOWNS (WITH THE HELP OF A "HOME-CLAS" PAPER PATTERN) IF THEY CARED TO.

Amongst feminine Royalties of to-day a large number of expert needlewomen are to be found. Perhaps the most notable of these is our own Queen Alexandra. In her youthful days, her Majesty had a very meagre dress allowance—far smaller, in fact, than that of the average present-day girl. There was no alternative but to make her own dresses and millinery, and accordingly the youthful Princess received lessons in this art, grew interested, and in a very short space of time could cut and stitch the greater part of her wardrobe. "The Queen of Roumania, who, by the by, is another expert needlewoman, produces some of the finest specimens of needlework ever seen. She was an exhibitor at the recent St. Louis Exhibition, and her work there was described by eminent judges as absolutely unexcelled.