

THE BOOKSHELF.

(By DELTA.)

Flashes from the Orient: By John Hazelhurst. (London; Hazell, Watson and Viney, 52, Long Acre, W.C.)

MR. HAZELHURST is evidently not only an ardent lover of nature, but is also gifted with a very fair share of the imagination, and the inspiration indispensable in a true poet. Lovers of the sonnet will find much to admire in this little book, which is devoted almost entirely to the praise and glory of summer. Out of a number of gems we select the following tribute, to the merits of a flower that has always been associated in our mind with summer and undiluted happiness.

THE COWSLIP.

The grass-grown meadows by the river's brink
Are pied with daisy white and hyacinth blue.
And lady's smock of pale carnative hue,
But more beloved than all spring flowers we deem
The Cowslip, with whose blooms the meadows teem.

In childhood to the fields their blossoms drew
Me and the honey bee where'er they grew,
Billowing in brightness to the horizon's rim.

O miracle of loveliness divine,
In thee high medicated virtues dwell,
Thy honeyed juices form delicious wine,
Restore the sick, refresh and cheer the woe.
The sick partaking thee no longer pine,
Thou hast a balm the suffering to heal.

As a poem to the first month of summer this following sonnet is most felicitous:—

JUNE.

Lo, June is here. The butterfly's awing:
A balmy fragrance is dispersed around,
O'er blossoming wide earth's circumference
What waves of fragrance the soft breezes bring!
The fields, aglow with summer's colouring,
Refract the sunshine from a myriad flowers.
The garden of the springtime's copious showers,
And the trees o'er leaves their kindly shadow fling.
Bience pervades, but for the ring dove's coo
And the lark's exultant song from morn to eve,
And the hum of bees who, murmurous, pursue
Their sweet vocation, nor the wine-cups leave
From dawn to evening's fall, bespreat with dew,
When the nightingale begins in song to grieve.

Though the sonnets are written primarily on the beauties of the English summer, the following ought to appeal to any dweller, in any clime, with British blood in his veins.

JINGOISM.

THE SHIPS, THE MEN, THE MONEY.

Favoured of God — the Gentile lordly race
Of England, hink of valour, throne of power,
The paramount proud genius of the hour,
Which has inherited the fort's grace
Of Israel, aspired earth's loftiest place,
Predominance their high imperial boast,
The lordship of the seas from coast to coast.
The writers of peace or war's menace—
Her subjects multiply in every land,
At dear old country's call range land and sea,
In deadly breach for death or glory stand,
And gladly die for Britain's sovereignty,
Their gold they willing place at her command,
Though bound by Dragon laws, they are the free.

That Mr Hazelhurst has much skill in the construction of the sonnet there can be no possible doubt. But occasionally he oversteps the bounds of poetic license and sacrifices correctness of appellation to euphony, a temptation, we should imagine, irresistible to one who sings. This book is the second of a series of four, which sing of spring, summer, autumn and winter, and so much have the author's interpretation of summer's attributes appealed to us that we hope to drink of his autumn vintage, share with him both what is sombre and bright in his delineation of winter, warm our hands at his yule log

and gladden our hearts with his songs of Christmas festivities. Our copy of this dainty volume has been received through Mr Thos. Richardson, Queen's Chambers, Colmore-road, Birmingham.

Uncle Sam and His Family:

Mr. and Mrs. Grattan Grey. (George Robertson and Co., Proprietary, Ltd., Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane.)

So great is our appreciation of this wonderfully informative and interesting book that we regret that its collaborators should have seen fit to mention the distressing circumstances under which they left New Zealand—circumstances we should never have alluded to as not in any way concerning the subject, or the quality of this work, which we at once declare to be as good, if not better, than any book of its scope we have ever read. Into the merits or demerits of the Boer war we do not purpose to enter, were we ever so inclined, which we are not, thinking the pages of a review of a work on America the wrong place for such dissertation.

But we are assured on one point, and that is, that the British Government having once entered into that disastrous war, it was the duty of every loyal citizen, to say nothing of its officials, to stand by it, or at least to refrain from adverse public criticism. And after reading "Uncle Sam," we can only reiterate our regret that want of proper reticence on the one hand, and, perhaps, precipitancy of action on the other, should have deprived New Zealand of so virile and so facile a pen. After some most interesting chapters on the discovery of America, the authors deal with America of today.

All that was best and worst, in San Francisco, before the earthquake, passes under review, and graphic pen pictures are given of what is most, and least, ideal in the institutions under which its inhabitants are governed. Nor are its social conditions overlooked. California, according to the enthusiastic writers, is the one place in the world to live, and die in. Mention is made of the similarity of Melbourne and San Francisco's rise and progress. Their populations are also contrasted, to the disadvantage of the former, and a reasonable and veracious enough explanation is given as to the failure of Australia to attract desirable immigrants. And the fault is not all distance. Here the writers point out that it is an absurdity to call the American race an Anglo-Saxon, and statistics are given of the conglomeration of races by which America is, and has always been, peopled. We take occasion to mention that there is much in "Uncle Sam" that will wound the amor patriae, and the amour propre of Britishers. But we are convinced that whatever comparison has been made by the writers to British disadvantage is counter-balanced by the kindly motive that underlies it. All that is best and greatest, and also all that is worst and weakest, in the anatomy of the United States is held up for example and stricture without fear or favour. The wedding of a number of races into one must have the effect of producing either the best or worst characteristics of those races, and it is an ideal of the best that is upheld by these writers, because they are of our blood. And if our vanity is touched, our hearts are correspondingly touched too.

America's shortcomings come in for scathing rebuke. Tammany, slavery to dollars, divorce, race, prejudice and cruelty towards colour, its apathy, in the past, towards Mormonism, its multiplicity of railway accidents, its stringent immigration laws, its Anglo-mania, and its pugilistic proclivities are strongly animadverted upon. Taking into consideration the vast area and the different climatic conditions that prevail in America, it is not surprising to find that what is legal in one State is illegal in another. Space forbids our detailing in full the different marriage laws that prevail in the States, but it is satisfactory to learn that the Government of America is thoroughly Darwinian, and aims at the survival of the fittest.

America's divorce laws, however, are as great a blot on her escutcheon as Tammany. Official statistics for the last twenty years prove that America's divorces exceed by 80,000 the number of divorces granted by the whole continent of Europe for the same period. In only one State of America—and that a Southern one—is divorce not recognised, remarriage being declared illegal.

The laws of naturalisation are quoted in detail, and statistics are given as to the admixture of races that form America's population. The Colour question is dealt with temperately and exhaustively. Labour conditions are noted, and compared with the conditions that prevail elsewhere. Most lucid and comprehensive is the account of the origin, progress and fall of Mormonism, which includes an exhaustive and graphic account of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, an event unparalleled in modern civilisation.

To attempt in the space at our disposal to give any sort of adequate idea of the contents of this book, would be to attempt the impossible, and so we strongly advise readers to buy the book, and learn from its 686 pages something about the geographical, topographical, municipal, political, educational, scientific, economical, social, ethical and moral institutions and conditions, under which "Uncle Sam and his Family" live and move and have their being.

We cannot conclude this review without a reference to the book's preface, which, contrary to our rule, we did not read until we had finished the book. The authors avow that the reason for the existence of this book is to make Americans and Australians better known to each other. Indeed they declare that it is essential that they should—not only that Australians may derive many useful and valuable object lessons from America's progress, but for defensive purposes—at least, this is what we have read between the lines. America, it would seem, is the natural protector of Australia. That geographical situation may count for something in America's fitness for assuming a protectorate of Australia, is possible, but "blood is thicker than water," in spite of the authors' opinion to the contrary, as expressed in Chapter fifty-four. America's population may be a conglomerate one, but Australia's is, in the main, an Anglo-Saxon; and England may be safely left to defend her own colonies without the aid of Uncle Sam, who, we are told, does not believe in alliances—defensive or otherwise—and the more so, as that which was most essentially British was wiped out after the Civil War. Whether the last state of America is not worse than the first is a question that admits of no doubt in our own mind. And, despite our appreciation of the splendid compilation, and the illuminative illustrations of America, old and new, we think that the compilers have been, and are, confounding the false principle of, with the spirit of true patriotism. The one is born of a system of economies, and is assailable; the other is of divine birth, and incorruptible. Our copy of this book has been received through George Robertson and Co., booksellers and stationers, Melbourne.

News Notes from the March "Bookman."

"The Dartmoor House that Jack Built." Mr. John Trevenna's new book, is a broad satire, and if it teaches anything it is this (says Mr. Trevenna): "Let criticism be done decently, if not with intellect, at least with honesty. A writer is not necessarily a brute because he deals with unpleasant subjects, and in 'The Dartmoor House that Jack Built,' I have merely portrayed myself, drawn the figure that my critics imagined—but all of them, of course, but the majority." A good many critics have referred to Mr. Trevenna as a disciple of Hardy, Phillips, and Zola, but he assures us that he never reads modern books, and, as a fact, has not read anything of either of these authors. His creed is that it is a mistake for the modern writer to sleep himself in the work of his contemporaries, and then sit down, saturated with their ideas, and expect to be original.

The latest publication by Tolstoy, "What is the Solution?" has been confiscated by the Russian police. Tolstoy discusses in this book the gradual impoverishment of the peasant classes, and points out that it is likely to lead to fresh political disturbances.

Gossip of Books and Bookman;
From the current number of the "Bookman."

In a letter to the Bookman, Mr V. B. San Jiva Rao, of India, says he believes that Bangalore, his own city, is the only place in India where the Milton Tercentenary was celebrated on anything like a grand scale. Europeans and Indians of both sexes took part in the proceedings, which were organised by the Friends Union.

We are to have a new volume of poems from Sir A. Conan Doyle. His "Songs of Action," published nine years ago, has gone through seven or eight editions, and this has led him to collect the poems he has written since then. They make a somewhat larger volume than the first, and Messrs Smith Elder have it in hand for early publication.

If proof were needed that Sir Conan Doyle has happily recovered from his recent illness, the number of literary schemes he has in hand would seem to furnish it. He is just now experimenting on a new work to which he is giving the name of "Through the Mists." It will take the form of a series of sketches, giving vivid glimpses of the past, keeping very closely to the truth of history, and introducing only that minimum of fiction that enables an author to get colour and human comment into his picture. He has, moreover, completed two plays. One, "In the Days of the Regent," which is so realistic that it will need a daring manager to produce it—is a study of the Prize Ring at the time when it was a national institution; the other combines philosophy with adventure, and is to be called "The Fires of Fate." It will be produced later in the year, probably with Mr Aubrey Smith to fill the part of the hero.

With reference to the former play, those readers who remember the goodly number of books on the noble art of self-defence, that line the walls of Mr A. Conan Doyle's study, as viewed "Through the Mage Door," will not have reason to complain of lack of material, or enthusiasm in the writing, of this play. And, if he fails to find a complimentary English Manager he will, no doubt, find a market for his wares in America.

EPIGRAMS FROM NEW BOOKS.

Sweet Isabel of Naragook: Lionel Laggard, (Greenings, January, 1909. 6/).

In my opinion a man's not fit for marriage until he's served an apprenticeship at the job—that is, until he has, egad, rung the changes on at least a dozen women's hearts and found out what the business means. Women want to be studied like mathematics.

That's none—every. It beats the yarn of the shepherd dog who, after washing himself all over, lost his proper smell, and was set upon by his own dogs.

Ladies do care as much, or almost as much, for the feathers as for the bird, don't they?

Death absolves a man from mere faults of nature; they belong to his humanity, and when his humanity dies, they die with it. There will be no judgment day for them.

If a man has not got someone he loves near to him, he is alone even though he be in a crowd.

I guess I know how to manage a woman. I just let her have her own way. She asks my advice then, and more often than not she takes it.

A mule can kick both hard and quick,
And when you least expect it;
A mule may kill, and often will
If you do not expect it.
But Woods' you know some time ago,
And after years of thinking,
Invented his Great Peppermint Cure,
Which stops all colics like winking.



There is a young lady of Chelsea,
Who says she is quite satisfied
Laxo-Tonic can cure
What all women endure,
For the Pill not only wants to be tried.

With folks on the outer Parcno,
Who live upon leaf and burgeo,
The sunny 'ole be chosen
Were not Laxo-Tonic
A part of the regimen too!

LAXO-TONIC PILLS. 10/