

The Bookshelf.

By DELTA.

BOOKSHELF FEUILLETON.

A Fine Book of Personal Travel, That Should Be of Special Interest to New Zealanders.

WEEKLY GRAPHIC readers will remember the splendidly illustrated record of personal travel entitled "Golden Days in Many Lands" which ran serially through that journal some time ago. It has now been issued in a colonial edition at 7s 6d, which is just half its English cost. It is a large, handsome volume, and is substantially and attractively bound in cloth, with titles in gold; is beautifully printed on fine paper, in clear, open type, is also fully indexed, and has 360 pages. It contains no fewer than forty-three illustrations, from photographs taken by the author, Miss Winifred Leys, the finest ever published of the people and lands described. It is an itinerary of travel that will be found invaluable to the intending traveller, and instructively interesting and entertaining to the stay-at-home. The route travelled, embraced both West and East, and all that is most historically interesting, most wonderful, or most beautiful, most picturesque, most charming, or most amusing in the people, countries, or things described by the way, is set down with accuracy, and a great charm of style. In short, "Golden Days in Many Lands" is a book that should be found on the bookshelf of every reader who wishes to become familiar with, or refresh his memory of, or to possess a memento of the people, places and things depicted in this book, which can be obtained at the Brett Publishing Co., or Wildman and Arey's. Methuen's are the book's publishers and are to be highly congratulated on the handsome appearance of the volume as a whole.

A Purposeful Anglican Organ.

We have received from the Council of the Layman's League, the March number of the official organ of that body, which is known as the New Zealand Churchman. The avowed objects of this "League" are to defend the Rights of the Laity against a too elaborate ritual, to maintain their right to assist in Church government according to the laws laid down for the laity, to educate churchmen as to what overlaps lawful ritual, and to make known to churchmen the most effective method of ensuring the efficiency of the corrective policy of the League. A large order, but a commendable one we venture to say. Among the contents of this number is an admirable leader concerning the new Bishop of the Diocese. Space forbids its inclusion, but we like both its matter, and the spirit in which it is couched. As its avowed purpose is to promote and foster the growth of Evangelicalism in the Church of New Zealand, its matter is devoted to that purpose. So that it comprises itself into a summary of what the Anglican Church is doing at "Home" and abroad, in the way of keeping that Church purely Evangelical and exposing those of her backsliders who, contrary to Anglican law, have turned their face Romewards. So long as the New Zealand Churchman maintains its present temperate tone, and so long as its purpose remains single, so long will it maintain its present influence for good among churchmen that count.

An Interesting Foster-Fraser Letter.

Mr. Foster Fraser seems to have taken very hardly the Australian strictures on his Australian book, judging by the following letter received by Mr. Champion of the Melbourne "Book Lover." Here it is, and below it are the genial reviewer's comments:—

"I have been camel-caravanning down in Southern Algeria and now I am tackling several boxes of correspondence and newspapers. I hope it is not too late to thank you for the very nice things you say about my 'Australia.' Some other Australian writers have not been so kindly. They remind me of the art critic of 'The Tailor' in this country, who each year visits the Royal Academy and demonstrates what fools these portrait

painters be, for there are four buttons on Mr. Thingamy's coat and only three button holes, that somebody else had no seams in his trousers, whilst the coat and the sleeve in another's picture is shown in one piece; so it is very bad art—from the tailor's point of view. I am too old a hand at writing not to understand quite well that the tailor-journalistic critic will easily find mistakes. But the question that I am really concerned about is whether the whole picture is a good likeness? Alas, my dear Champion, I am afraid that there is something feminine about you Australians. When you ask for a portrait, it is not a portrait you want but a flattering picture, with the wrinkles painted out, a pretty bow given to the lip, those creases by the mouth removed, and that warts—which Oliver Cromwell, being a man, insisted on being reproduced—ignored altogether. I had thought that, on the whole, I had done Australia a good turn. My book was my gift to the world in return for all the exquisite kindnesses

vincing proof of this novelist's merit can be adduced than that which lies in the fact that "The City of Beautiful Nonsense" is in its twenty-fifth edition, and the inimitable "Greatest Wish in the World" is already in its eighteenth.

Two Books Worth Reading.

Two new novels, which provide superlative reading, are "The Man," by Bram Stoker, a novel of characterisation and exciting adventure, and "The Mountain of God," by the popular author of "The Veil." Those readers who remember that superbly written book will be delighted to hear that the scenes of this new book are laid in that East, which, in the depiction of this writer, has absolutely no rival. As we have only just received the book through Wildman and Arey, we are not in a position to give a comprehensive forecast of the book, but the Levant is the locale of the book's various scenes. The illustrations of the story are exquisitely done.

Mr. Moor's Memories of Stevenson in Samoa.

"Many a day and many a night did Stevenson spend with me. Time and again, when he felt played out and written out, when inertia or despondency seized him, he would come down to bo

some remarkably good ghost stories—short tales that would make one's flesh creep—and he declared they were true, or at least he gave them the credit of being authentic. Certainly he believed them himself, and no justifying remark of mine could shake him in his faith. But I never heard him say he had seen a ghost. Once he informed me that in certain parts of France the people believed there were apirits, or 'spirit animals,' which accompanied them in their walks. For instance, some who dwell in those parts believed that just behind them, or at their side, there trotted along 'spirit wolves'; others were attended by 'spirit dogs,' and so convinced were they of it that they fancied they actually heard the supernatural footfalls, and they would cautiously and fearfully glance behind them, as if expecting to see something tangible and animated.

Stevenson's Attitude Towards Religion.

"We never discussed the Bible seriously, so far as I recollect. Reverent always, where matters of religion were concerned, Stevenson was not what I regard as a religious man—and this, despite the fact that for a month or two he taught in the Sunday school at Apia. The interest he took in the Sunday school, in my view, was more that of the student of human nature, the psychologist, the writer of stories, than of one who was really concerned for the spiritual welfare of his pupils, whether whites or half-castes—for the full blood Samoan children did not come under his purview. Stevenson, though he was more or less a dual personality, was mostly Bohemian; and more than once, to his annoyance, has he been surprised in Bohemia. The Stevenson whom some writers have told us of—the man of morals, the preacher, the maker of prayers—is not the Stevenson I knew. Yet it is true that he moralised and preached in his own peculiar way, and true that he wrote some exquisite prayers. The truth is, there were two Stevensons! And I write of this strange dual personality as I found it, not as revealed through the looking-glass of the man's books."

An Interesting Reprint.

We who have but lately re-read that fine novel "The Cloister and the Hearth" which, next to "Les Miserables," we look upon as the finest novel in the world, are delighted to insert the following paragraph which we have taken from the "New Zealand Times":—"Many who have read Charles Reade's splendid historical story, 'The Cloister and the Hearth,' one of the few really great historical novels, may not be aware that the original version of the story was published in 1859 in "Once a Week," under the title of "A Good Fight," making thirty-six chapters, the first twenty-six of which appeared in "The Cloister and the Hearth." "A Good Fight" has now been issued as a separate book by Mr Henry Browde (in the Oxford Library of Prose and Poetry), the price being half-a-crown. It is prefaced by an introduction by Andrew Lang, who, in his role of historical investigator, discusses the parentage of Erasmus, who, it will be remembered, is the son of the hero of "The Cloister and the Hearth." But I wish it had been possible to reproduce the splendid wood cut illustrations drawn by that master of line, the late Charles Keene, which adorned the story as it appeared in "Once a Week," for they were exceptionally fine examples of black and white art.

A Generous Offer.

Messrs Macmillan and Co., have, with characteristic generosity, voluntarily expressed their intention of placing a Dickens Memorial Stamp in every book of every edition published by them during the Dickens Centenary year. A magnificent example that we hope will be imitated in all Dickensian publications. For, after all, they are only giving Dickens' descendants back their own. Nevertheless, the Macmillan firm, in initiating this procedure, deserve the thanks of Dickens' posterity. And we are confident that they have already secured these.

Apocryph of Dickens.

Since writing his introductions to the various volumes of Dickens' works that have appeared in "Everyman's Library," Mr G. K. Chesterton has discovered a good deal more to say about Dickens, his times and characters. He has, there



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the Australians extended to me. But I fear me the Australians throw my kindness back at me. Well, well, I don't complain. It is a misfortune to be ignorant, but it is a tragedy to be ignorant if you are ignorant. What a convulsive eye-opener some complacent Australians will receive some of these days! Salams.

I think Mr. Foster Fraser is mistaken. All of us in this country are by no means Australians born. Most of us are, first and last, Englishmen. The criticisms he smarted under are made by the newspapers, which, with a few notable exceptions, pander to the worst side of the noisy, unthinking, spindle-shanked Australian, who has neither knowledge nor manners, nor the faintest description of public spirit. Wait till the inevitable comes, Mr Foster Fraser, when you will see the English people on this huge continent get up and march towards their goal.

Temple Thurston's New Novel.

Mr. Temple Thurston goes on from strength to strength in each new output. His latest book, "The Patchwork Papers," is a collection of short stories, twenty-four of them, the majority of which have appeared in the daily press. They are all well worth reading, as without exception all the work of this author has ever been. No more con-

cheered up. Sometimes he was pretty hopeless—all done for.' But, as a rule, it was nothing more than brain weariness, and he only required a rest to put him right again, a change of atmosphere and surroundings. After a short trip away he always came back benefited. I fancy the women folk were given to coddling him too much at home, and too much of this is good for neither man nor beast.

"Though he would come to me full of all sorts of troubles he rarely uttered a word of complaint concerning his bodily ailments; indeed, for a man who suffered so much he was one of the most resigned and uncomplaining men I ever met. His fortitude in this respect was one of the distinguishing characteristics of the man. But in other matters he was easily upset, and I have seen him get into a rage over the most trivial thing. I have likewise seen him engrossed in trifling subjects; and I have known him to use his best energies to assist a friend in some small matter in which he had little or no real concern."

Was Stevenson a Believer in Spiritual Phenomena?

"Sometimes you would catch him in what was almost a spiritualistic trance, and I really believe there was a good deal of the spiritualistic in his nature. I remember that he used to tell me