

I HAVE received from the publisher, Mr T. Fisher Unwin, *Another Englishwoman's Love Letters*, by Barry Pain, and *The Letters of Her Mother to Elizabeth*, both published uniformly at one shilling. *Another Englishwoman's Love Letter* is written in Barry Pain's best style, and is most amusing throughout. It is in fact a humorous criticism of *An Englishwoman's Love Letters*. The author says in his preface:—"Of course if the book had not had value I should never have dreamed of having a little fun with it; servants break only valuable things. Besides I do not look forward to a seagreen flood of sentimental literature let loose on the public in consequence of the success of *An Englishwoman's Love Letters* with any equanimity." In his explanation the author assures the reader seriously that "the letters are printed exactly as they were written, with the exception of such alterations, additions and omissions as may happen to have been made. In order to meet the requirements of the Food Adulteration Act, no absolute guarantee of their genuineness can be given, but every effort is made to the contrary." Where all are so good it is difficult to select an extract, but the following from Letter I may serve the purpose. The asterisks are mine, as space forbids quoting at length. "Beloved, —This is your first letter from me; yet it is not the first I have written to you. . . . There are letters to you lying in love's waste-paper basket. This is my confession I gather from a good novel, recently published, that it is peculiarly characteristic of the Englishwoman to take off her self-respect as it had been a garment before entering upon an epistolary course of affianced love. I wrote love letters to you long before I had brought you up to the point. I may go further and beat the original Englishwoman on her own ground. I wrote letters to you even before I had ever met you or heard of you. They were to my betrothed, whoever it might be, like the trade circulars which are marked 'Or present occupier.' One has to get ready beforehand. I got in a stock of letters for

my engagement just as I shall get my trousseau for my—am I brazen?" This book has value outside its humour. It will serve as a useful text book on the art of writing love letters. It will doubtless introduce an air of originality and pleasing candour into these effusions which will considerably relieve their monotony.

The Letters of her Mother to Elizabeth is as the author's note affirms "a reply to the question instinctively asked by everybody who has read *The Visits of Elizabeth*, viz., What sort of a woman was Elizabeth's mother?" There is no doubt whatever that these letters answer the question very clearly. Take for instance this extract: "Lord Valmond has fifty thousand a year besides the house in Grosvenor Square. You will hardly meet a more obligable parti; I hear he is very fast; they say he gave Betty Milbanke, the snake dancer at the Palace, all the diamonds she wears. . . . The girl who gets this Valmond will not only be lucky but clever; the way to attract him is to snub him; the fools who have hitherto angled for him have put cake on their hooks; but if I were fishing in the water in which my Lord Valmond disported himself I should bait my hook with a common worm. It is something he has never yet seen." Elizabeth's mother does not confine herself to advice to her daughter by any means, her letters are full of breezy society gossip, and expose in an amusing manner all her own weaknesses while writing in no sparing manner of those of others. Her descriptions of the people she meets are inimitable. The American millionaire who is marrying his daughter to the Duke of Clandevil, Lady Beatrice, who is as fat as Lady Theodosia Doran, and plays tennis with the curate, Mr Frame, who beat the Somerset champion, but dare not beat her; the Vane-Corduroys, who made their money out of Sparklets or Corduroy's Lung Tonic; Captain Bennett, who found the writer's lost handkerchief sticking to his coat after he got to his Club, called to return it, and eventually became