

to follow them down the same love-lit paths to the stereotyped consummation of earthly bliss. Ah, me, these amorous Edwins and Angelinas, Romeos and Juliets, 'Arries and 'Arriets, call them what we may, the theme is the same, and the story old and oft told—old as the days when Ruth found favour in the eyes of Boaz as she gleaned in the cornfields—yet we never tire of it. Now and then our "Finis" quest is rewarded by a gem of the harmlessly exotic type of ending where some fond swain, sighing like a furnace, voices a true lover's plaint. The ending of "The Prisoner of Zenda" is sentiment which we cannot gainsay. Rassendyl leaves us with the words:—"Shall I see her face again, the pale face and the glorious hair? Of that I know nothing. Fate has no hint, my heart no presentiment, But if it be never, if I can never hold sweet converse again with her, or look upon her face, or know from her her love, why then this side the grave I shall live as becomes the man whom she loves, and for the other side I shall pray a dreamless sleep."

Beshrew me if the sentiment doesn't ring true! Some time or other most of us have our little romances, and we retain a soft side for their ideal presentment. When I closed "The Prisoner of Zenda" I found my pipe had gone out, and the fire burned low, and my thoughts went back—but "that's another story," as Kipling says. After all, "il y en a toujours une autre," if not Rosalinde, then Juliet, for—

"If she think not well of me
What care I how fair she be."

Consoling, indeed, the philosophy of these gay Caroline poets in their lispings love lyrics full of quaint conceits and graceful imagery!

It has never been my fortune to discover an ending of greater delicacy and simplicity than that from Disraeli's famous novel, "Lo-

thair":—"I have been in Corisande's garden, and she has given me a rose." This is a chef d'oeuvre of literary artifice; more fragrant than rare exotics this rose from Corisande's garden. "Yet ah," as Omar sings—

'Yet ah, that spring should vanish with the
rose,
That youth's sweet scented manuscript
should close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who
knows?"

God wot, the mystery is passing strange; too strange for our comprehension.

"Candide" ends fittingly thus:—"Cela est bien dit, mais il faut cultiver notre jardin."

The "Finis" apologetic is not a little irritating:—"In like manner, gentle reader, returning you my thanks for your patience, which has conducted you thus far, I take the liberty to withdraw myself from you for the present." One is tempted to express the irreverent wish that the writer may not soon emerge from his self-imposed seclusion and inflict himself on the "gentle reader."

"Gentle reader," forsooth! The very phrase is sycophantic if not insulting. It savours overmuch of the "nunc plauditis" for our customary attitude of frigid reserve; the enlightened reader refuses to have his vanity tickled by the doubtful compliment.

One of the finest pieces of writing in our English language is that from Thackeray's pen, describing the death of Colonel Newcome, noblest type of English gentleman that literature affords us:—"At the usual evening hour, the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome's hands outside the bed feebly beat time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said, "Adsum," and fell back. It was the word we used at school when names were called, and,