

Kophetua the Thirteenth.

Mr. Julian Corbett, whose previous stories, the *Fall of Asgard* and *For God and Gold*, we have not had the good fortune to read, has struck upon a new and decidedly entertaining idea in fiction. The novel is constructed upon the ballad of Cophetua and the Beggar Maid, lines from which are prefixed to each chapter. The scene is "Oneiria" (the land of dreams), an imaginary commonwealth in Northwestern Africa. A very matter-of-fact introductory chapter recites the manner of foundation of this colony by an Englishman, of the Elizabethan times, whose "followers were believed to have

been recruited from among the hardy sea-faring population of the coasts of Bohemia," Shakespeare's Bohemia. The nation disappeared under an uprising of the Mussulman Berbers, and all that is now known of it is the romantic episode here related. King Kophetua the Thirteenth has come to his thirtieth year without taking a wife. His chancellor, Turbo, has set his mind against the sex. There comes to his kingdom the beautiful Mlle. de Tricotrin, who schemes for the Crown of Kisses, which is the one great subject of Oneirian politics. Penelophon, the beggar maid from the beggars' empire, "the Liberties of Saint Lazarus," is her fated rival. Through a series of adventures bordering, but not offensively, on the melodramatic, the question of questions for Oneiria is happily decided. Mr. Corbett writes in a style of finished charm; his pleasing conceit of making a story in which the ballad and an imaginary commonwealth of the Utopian species come together as elements, supplies him many occasions for keen thrusts at existing institutions, and the romance moves on with unflagging spirit. It would spoil much of the interest of the book to enter into detail concerning it; but we can assure its purchasers that they have before them some hours of most agreeable entertainment. A more entirely fresh and animated volume of romantic fiction we have not encountered for a long time.—Macmillan & Co. \$1.00.