

above named. Strong where Miss Braddon is feeble, dignified where Miss Broughton is fantastic, and as clever in depicting local scenery, and particularly local life and character, as either the author of *The Princess of Thule* or of *Mary Anerley*, she has given in *Lord Brackenbury* a singularly even and delicate piece of work; broad and generous in its scheme; very ingenious in its details, written with great firmness but elasticity of touch, as fresh in its materials as a new country to a strange visitor, and as interesting — well, as interesting as a novel *ought* to be. Nobody who makes Lord Brackenbury's acquaintance in the first chapter of his romantic history in the broker's office at Genoa will be willing to part with him until compelled to do so, in the last chapter, as he sails away forever from his English family and friends.

Lord Brackenbury is a young and worthy English nobleman, introduced to us in Genoa, with an obsequious valet for his sole companion, and in the act of buying a costly case of jewels designed as a wedding gift to his affianced bride. Belting his jewels about his person, he sets out by post for Rome, and mysteriously disappears from the face of the earth by the way. The sensation of this event soon settles into a sorrowful mystery. A younger brother, Lancelot, in due time, and in spite of himself, succeeds to the estates and the title; and finally takes Lord Brackenbury's place in full by marrying his intended. All this takes up the first half of the book, and, besides the Italian episode, which is related with great power of naturalness, introduces us to some very charming English landscapes and family pictures.

In the meantime a mysterious sailor turns up at Verona — a Romeo for the Juliet whom he finds there in the person of a lovely Italian girl. The reflection, in their attachment and betrothal, of the Shakespearian romance is a consummate piece of literary art, and calls for the highest praise. Whether the brilliancy or the beauty of this part of the tale is its surpassing quality, we are at a loss to say; but it is delightful altogether. Of course one cannot help guessing who the gallant Cesare Donato may be; but the motive of his disguise and the occasion of his voluntary exile do not lie on the surface; and Lord Brackenbury's disappearance remains a mystery. Between this pure love going on in Verona, and the fortunes of Lancelot and Winifred, the story plays back and forth until the two parties come face to face and a momentary recognition of the truth ensues. But it is only for a moment; and the villainy of Prouting, Lord Brackenbury's valet, alone effects a complete revelation.

The end can hardly be called satisfactory. Lord Brackenbury was too noble a man, his Italian girl-bride was too lovely, to be let go as they are, even in an act of renunciation; and we cannot help feeling that Miss Edwards should have found some way to bring

her chief hero back to his own, while still leaving Lancelot and Winifred in enjoyment of each other and of the good things which a brother's generosity provided for them. We cannot help feeling, too, that the disguise of Cesare Donato is a little too strongly marked, and that the picture of his life as a Mediterranean trading captain has almost a touch of the extravagance of a Dumas romance. These, however, are trifles, in a work otherwise strong and well-proportioned, and of unexceptionable refinement and purity. It will interest at every point, if it does not fascinate; its more striking passages — such, for example, as those delineating the life of the "dark folk" of the North country, the Verona chapters, and the account of the eruption of Vesuvius — are of commanding excellence; while it is written throughout with a spirit and truthfulness and force and beauty which disarm criticism.

LORD BRACKENBURY.*

A GREATER contrast between two works of fiction could hardly be presented than by *A Sailor's Sweetheart* and *Lord Brackenbury*, two of the three latest issues in Harper's Franklin Square Library; yet each in its way is a remarkably good novel. The first we described to our readers in our last number. To the second we address ourselves now. Miss Edwards has not been read in this country, we should judge, nearly so much as Miss Braddon and Rhoda Broughton, or even as William Black or Mr. Blackmore; but this, her story of *Lord Brackenbury*, is as well worth reading as any book by either member of the mixed quartette

* Lord Brackenbury. A Novel. By Amelia B. Edwards. Harper & Brothers. Franklin Sq. Lib. 15c.