

## BOOKMAN BREVITIES.

Under the title *Five Lectures on Shakespeare*, Messrs. Henry Holt and Co. publish some very suggestive and lucid criticisms by Dr. Ten Brink, excellently translated by Julia Hamilton. It deals with the principal characteristics of Shakespeare, the chronology of his works, and a consideration of his genius as a dramatist, as a comic poet, and as a writer of tragedy.—From Tait, Sons and Co. comes a book entitled *Americans in Europe*. The author in his preface makes use of the word "tasty," and the rest of the book is as cheap and vulgar as this would enable us to infer. Whoever buys it will waste his money, and whoever reads it will waste his time.—Mr. Berkeley Updike sends us a copy of his beautifully printed *Vexilla Regis*, which, having been privately issued in a first edition, is now given to the public with some few corrections and with the hymn of Venantius Fortunatus whence the title is taken, included. It consists of a quotation for each day of the year, the selections being taken from very many sources, and in this respect differing from the familiar anthologies of this character. They are also different in not being restricted to a mere line or two, but are of sufficient length to have

a definite value of their own. Thus the selections for January range over a wide field, including the Bible, George Eliot, Ozanam, Lacordaire, Pascal, James Russell Lowell, Shakespeare, Balzac, William Blake, Wordsworth, St. Augustine, Francis Bacon, Père de Coudrette, and others.—*The Land of the Sun*, by Christian Reid, and published by the Appletons, is a combination of novel and guide-book, the guide-book on the whole predominating. The rather mild adventures of a family party in Mexico are described with a good deal of deliberation, and there is a large amount of description and general information conveyed in one form or another. Twenty well-executed illustrations from photographs of buildings and places in Mexico add to the attractive appearance of a book that may be safely read by the most nervous person.—The Messrs. Macmillan publish Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, in a reprint of the edition of 1869, which contains the author's last corrections, and also a facsimile of the title-page of the original edition of 1857 (misplaced in the binding), with the original illustrations of Hablot Browne ("Phiz"), and with a biographical and bibliographical introduction by Charles Dickens the younger. The typography is excellent, and the price (one dollar) remarkably reasonable.

The same publishers send us Mr. Arthur L. Fonda's monograph, *Honest Money*, being an enlargement of an article which appeared from his pen two years ago in the *American Journal of Politics*. It is "an attempt to analyse the requirements of a perfect money," as the author says, and having done so, Mr. Fonda proceeds to set forth the conclusions resulting from his analysis. He holds the monometallic gold standard to be the source of most of our economic ills, and argues for a standard based upon a large number of commodities—what Professor Jevons described as a "multiple legal tender"—a plan proposed as long ago as 1822 by Mr. Joseph Lowe. The actual currency he would make wholly paper. This, he thinks, would give a standard of value as nearly invariable as any that can possibly be obtained, and one that would make the disturbances resulting from hoarding impossible. The commodities that are to serve as a multiple legal ten-

der he would have selected by a commission, and suggests the number of such commodities as one hundred, among them corn, tobacco, wheat, oats, and other staples. The great merit of such a standard he holds to be its unlikeness to the standard of any other nation, and thus beyond the reach of foreign monetary legislation.—Having become responsible for the bane in the shape of Mr. Fonda's book, the Messrs. Macmillan very properly provide the antidote, by reprinting in a most attractive and convenient form, and at the low price of seventy-five cents each, two little volumes, one containing select chapters and passages from Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, and the other the first six chapters of Ricardo's *Principles of Political Economy*, these last being the chapters that contain his general economic theory.

*Castle Rackrent* and *The Absentee*. *Japhet in Search of a Father*. Macmillan's new series begins well. We might wish the print a little larger, but no other complaint is justified. The introducers, Mrs. Ritchie and Mr. Hannay, have done their part very pleasantly, taking exactly the tone that persuades us willingly to renew an acquaintance with Miss Edgeworth and Captain Marryat. The illustrations—in the first volume by Chris Hammond, in the second by H. M. Brock—are abundant and really excellent. The series evidently means to deserve popularity. Galt, Borrow, and Susan Ferrier are on its list, and we have not too many good editions of these.

A number of convenient little books in paper covers for school use come to us from Messrs. Maynard, Merrill & Co., constituting the latest issues of their "English Classic Series." Just why Dante's *Inferno* the story of Aladdin, and extracts from Philippe de Commines and Benvenuto Cellini should be styled English classics one does not very readily see; classics in English would probably express the intended meaning better. The little books themselves, however, are well printed, the selections are judiciously made, and the short biographical sketches of the authors and the explanatory foot-notes are well enough as far as they go; but if the students for whom they are intended are so youthful as to require a note to explain to them what the "wing" of an

army means, they will probably find that such a note as that on "houseled"—i.e., "received the Eucharist"—leaves them still in the dark as to what the writer had in mind. The same publishers bring out an edition of Labiche and Martin's comedy, *La Poudre aux Yeux*, edited by Mr. A. B. Solial, with notes chiefly explanatory of the idioms, and a special vocabulary of all the words.

The American Book Company issued last month *Roman Life in Latin Prose and Verse*, by Professor H. T. Peck and Dr. Robert Arrowsmith. Its aim is to give a survey of Latin literature in the form of representative extracts, which shall at the same time afford a good deal of information about the private life of the Romans. To this end the editors have got together a large amount of material not readily accessible to the student, often from non-literary sources—nursery songs, charms and spells, popular songs, serenades, jokes, parodies, advertisements, scribblings found upon the walls at Pompeii, etc., in addition to passages such as those of Pliny on the Roman doctors, Gaius on the business capacity of women, the *Testamentum Porcelli*, Martial's most famous epigrams, Juvenal's invective against the "new woman" at Rome, the younger Pliny's ghost story, the comic dinner-party of Trimalchio described by Petronius, and many more things of a like character. Biographical sketches of the writers head each selection, with a selected bibliography, and there are also full notes and an index. The book is a novel one in both its plan and execution. A large number of interesting illustrations give it a very attractive appearance.

The fourth issue of *Minerva*, the indispensable collection of university statistics, is sent us by Trübner & Co., of Strassburg. Its frontispiece is a portrait of Lord Kelvin, etched by Hubert Herkomer. To the list of American colleges given in the former volumes, there are now added Bryn Mawr, Cincinnati University, Colgate University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Nebraska University, the Ohio Wesleyan University, the University of Vermont, Wellesley, and the Western Reserve University, bringing up the total for the United States to thirty-nine.