

private circulation. This must be our feeling when we see homage to Stevenson's memory and genius take this shape. A comparison of certain passages with the original convinces us that the work has been done with great conscientiousness and much subtlety. Probably no living Englishman could have done it better, if as well. To Mr. Castle it was doubtless as serious a task as any of the able works he has written in his own tongue; to Stevenson this version, "dans une langue que lui-même il aimait, admirait, et connaissait si bien," is a delicate compliment, but it is all the same the kind of literary recreation which concerns the writer most of all. One can understand the attraction of the work. The charm of the style, as well as its elaborate and uneasy search after perfection, must have meant difficulties hard but fascinating to overcome. And then Mr. Castle relates the interesting circumstance that it was "à l'ombre d'une de ces anciennes *Residenzen* d'Allemagne, autrefois palais de petit prince régissant, mais ne conservant plus rien de princier que la physiognomie de ses façades genre *rocaille*. . . . que pendant quelques semaines de printemps, passées dans ce milieu ancien régime qui eût fort bien pu, au temps de sa prospérité, être la capitale d'Othon lui-même, que je m'amusai à traduire l'histoire charmante que Stevenson avait placée dans un cadre semblable." Mr. Castle is of those that think "Prince Otto" Stevenson's masterpiece, and calls this being a true Stevensonian. This seems to us merely an example of the common error of confounding a man's manner with his nature, and, to quote Buffon's well-known dictum is no answer, but only an invitation to an endless controversy.

HONOR ORMTHWAITE. By the Author of "Lady Jean's Vagaries." (Bentley.)

Lady Ormthwaite's past dogs her. The past consists of her poor relations, the memory of her former husband, whom she had abandoned, and who died after a long career of dissipation at the age of twenty-one, and a child whom she had entrusted to a cousin to bring up while she went to the service which gave her her chance of becoming a lady of wealth and title. By the time Sir Gregory asks her to be his wife both the former husband and the child have died, so she is free to learn the duties of her new position, which she does by aid of an unusual intellect, gaining a great reputation among serious people for her knowledge of and judgments on public questions. The metamorphosis takes the reader by surprise. The cousin turns up years after, and confesses the child is not dead after all, that she has grown into a handy girl who could "toast a rasher, and mix 'enry's glass of gin-and-water, and fill his pipe, and spend her arpeny so as to get a pennyworth for it, like any old woman." Welcome news to the great lady. She bribes the cousin to keep the girl, whose existence she hides from the baronet. But conscience at a critical moment of her life calls to her to send for her daughter, who is introduced into the house as a dependent. A frivolous, over-dressed, light-headed, but not bad-hearted little minx she turns out to be, much resembling her father's family. Another critical moment arrives, and my lady confesses the whole matter to her husband, who is very terrible in his wrath. Then, when we have really been wound up to some excitement over the difficult situation, the story-teller cuts the thread of interest by proving that, after all, the girl is only the late humble and dissipated husband's niece, imported from the workhouse by the cousin for the sake of the maintenance money of Lady Ormthwaite. The writer has ingenuity at least, and, feeling it to be her strongest point, she does not spare the supply of it.

TALES OF OUR COAST. By S. R. Crockett, Harold Frederic, Gilbert Parker, W. Clark Russell, and Q. (Chatto.)

The popular names of the authors of the five stories collected here are enough recommendation. And they are strong specimens of their authors' powers. Q's "Roll-Call of the Reef," printed before in "Wandering Heath," will be already widely familiar, and the others have probably been gathered from scattered periodicals. The editor must be one who knows what a good sea-story means. Even a sea-side holiday may seem romantic in the company of "Tales of our Coasts."

THE ROBE OF LUCIFER. By F. M. White. 6s. (Innes.)

The ingenuity, the inventiveness, the many lively qualities in Mr. White's book, are bound to fail of their usual result, which is amusement, devoted as they are to the service of the central idea in the story, a more than usually terrible one. Greenstrand, a *blasé* young millionaire, has come hastily to the conclusion that all men, and women too, are frauds, that virtue does not exist when temptation comes in the way. He offers to prove it, and the challenge is accepted. A fiend in human form, with Death for his name, is appointed agent of the scheme, is given *carte blanche* as to money and methods, and sets about tempting the great and the small who have reputations for honour and good living. The main part of the book consists in the separate tales of his successes, with their resulting ruin and misery and havoc. But he is resisted sometimes, and one of his failures causes the death of the woman whom his master had learned to love passionately. Greenstrand's punishment converts him to a better view of mankind. The moral, of course, is all right, but we confess that we do not like such a systematic exposure of human weakness. Only a poet or other great reader of the human heart might touch the theme fitly. But Mr. White is an able writer and a clever inventor of incident.

THE WOOING OF FORTUNE. By Henry Cresswell. (Hurst & Blackett.)

Mr. Cresswell has applied the ever-popular ways and methods of the detective story to enliven a modern society drama. The result is a great success. The puzzling plot is well sustained, for though the connection between the guileless Brixton doctor and the heroine, otherwise the arch-fiend of the story, is soon visible, the plot does not depend merely on one mystery, and the general entanglement is a very pretty one. The elegant young Pelham has real detective talents, though he never discovered these till he lost sight of the lady to whom he was devoted, and swore never to rest till he had frustrated the plot that kept her from him. The relations between Mrs. Beaumont and her parents are a terribly painful element in the story, which otherwise is so entertaining. Perhaps Mr. Cresswell might have humoured us a little, especially in a novel which is of the artificial order, by giving the angelically foolish doctor something of a good time before killing him off.

MRS. MARTIN'S COMPANY AND OTHER STORIES. By Jane Barlow. Iris Series. (Dent.)

In nearly all her lighter work Miss Barlow firmly shuts her eyes to the really ugly in life. Poverty is the almost constant background of her dramas, but she uses it to show the brightness of some alleviation, and the inventiveness of the human mind which, in the most distressful circumstances, always seeks happiness, and often, she thinks, finds a fair amount of joy. If you cannot, or will not, tell the whole tale of human life, this is a very wholesome portion to select. Here in these stories of Irish life Miss Barlow shows the tender humour, the sweetness, and the interest in her kind that we have grown to associate particularly with her name. "A Lost Recruit," "After Seven Years," where she does permit herself to be frankly sad, and "A Very Light Railway," one of her delightfully sympathetic tales of children, stand out even among her admirable work, and show a growing faculty of conciseness and an increasing lightness of touch.

THE BOOKMAN'S TABLE.

THE POEMS OF JOSEPH SHERIDAN LE FANU. Edited by A. P. Graves. With portrait. 3s. 6d. (Downey.)

Mr. Graves is eloquent about the merits of certain anonymous poems found in old volumes of the *Dublin University Magazine*, which he has discovered to be Le Fanu's. One of them, "The Legend of the Glave," is a fine rendering of the Gaelic legend of the beautiful and cruel Fionula, who sent her lover to certain death to satisfy a vain caprice, and of the penitential wanderings of her spirit which have never ceased. This find is worth much gratitude. The Venetian drama of "Beatrice," on the other