

as must have been in that African wilderness, it requires no great exercise of the imagination to conceive of such actions as the author depicts; but put the same characters down in the heart of London and make them mingle with people of modern ideas, and their system of thought and actions would immediately be open to ridicule. Indeed, one of the most striking things in the story is the difference between Holly's and Vincey's ideas on the one hand, and those of Ayesha on the other. Each is surprised at what the other tells and in the case of Leo and Ayesha, they are only brought to a unity of conception by the power of love, which in their case is unusually strong.

Viewing this book as a whole, we do not think that it will take a very high place in literature. There is nothing in it calculated to shape the purposes of mankind and to set them to new methods of thought. Still, we do not suppose that such was the author's intention, and it would be foolish indeed to criticise the work for what was not intended to be brought out. The book certainly has the advantage of being a novelty. We do not remember to have read anything which approaches it in style. Read from time to time, such a work would be a source of some amusement and even instruction; but any prolonged indulgence in such reading would, we think, tend to an unhealthy state of mind, and would probably end in tiring the reader with the presentation of impossible events.

THACKERAY.

We notice that in the April number of *Scribner's Magazine* will be begun the publication of those letters of Thackeray, which have, as yet, never been published. The letters taken as a whole, will cover that portion of the novelist's life about which least has been known; and in view of the fact that there are many passages in Thackeray's life well calculated to furnish the materials for a romance of no ordinary character, these letters will no doubt be eagerly received by the public.

Just in this connection we would like to say a word or two in regard to this great Englishman. We may be mistaken, but it does seem to us that Thackeray's novels are becoming less and less frequently read as we draw away from the times for which he wrote. We will except his "Vanity Fair" and "Pendennis," which almost everyone has read; but even in these, although two of his very best novels, Thackeray has by no means exhausted the art of pleasing his reader, and making him feel as much at home as if he were in actual conversation with the author. In fact, one of the things that always pleased us most, when reading Thackeray, was the perfect ease with which he makes his reader understand what he says. He seems to take one right into his confidence from the very start, and to pour out to him that vast fund of wit, pleasantry, and satire always at his command. Where, let it be asked, will one find the follies and vices of a gay and frivolous society exposed with such stinging ridicule as we find in some of Thackeray's works? It almost seems as if we could see the blushes of shame called forth by his words. And yet this was but one phase of Thackeray's curious nature. No man could be more gentle, kind, and pleasant than he when he wished to be so: we turn over another page of the novel before us, and we almost fancy that a woman, a mother, is speaking to us; and it may be, kindly reproaching us for our misdeeds. This changing nature of Thackeray is what makes him so charming, because it but shows that he was swayed by the same moods and the same impulses as we are, thereby making it so easy for us to sympathize with his characters, because he puts himself at one time or another into each and every one of them in turn.

Turning from his novels we come to his lives, or rather sketches, of those famous English humorists, whose names will live as long as the world lasts. These sketches are not written in the style of the stereotyped biographies which are generally so stale and uninteresting, for they show the men to us exactly as they must have appeared to each other; taking us with them anywhere; introducing us to them at their meals, their clubs, and, in short, giving us so perfect an acquaintance with the wits themselves, as to cause us to wish either to extend to them the hand of friendship across the gulf of time, or turn from them in disapproval. It just occurs us as we write, that while reading these sketches one of our favorite mental pictures of Thackeray was seeing him sitting in the midst of a company of choice spirits, his hands thrust into his breeches pockets (as in a picture of him we once saw in *The Century*) and looking quizzically over his glasses at his interested auditors.

It was once said in our hearing, that Thackeray never created a single manly character, or one with whom we could enter into full sympathy, and whose life, taken as a whole, could possibly be a reflex of any character in real life. The reason for this it seems to us is that Thackeray was too full of womanly emotions and caprices himself to thoroughly portray the feminine character from a proper standpoint. Those who have read his life will reveal numberless proofs of this trait in his nature.

In conclusion we would strongly urge every student who is not as yet acquainted with the great novelist's works, to avail himself of the opportunity offered to make himself thoroughly familiar with the author. He will speedily learn to appreciate him and to recognize in him a man, who probably put more genuine feeling into his works, than almost any other writer of fiction. It would be well to read his books in the order of their production; for in this way one will be able to note the progress of the author's mind and to follow, or rather to accompany him through his various conditions of mind and feeling to the end.

EULOGIUM.

The rapidity with which our noted men are passing away is astonishing. Truly, it seems as if the harvest of greatness and goodness is ripe; and the reaper with his keen sickle is gathering the golden sheaves to his garner. Grant, Logan, with numerous other great men, live only in memory. Each has written his life with deeds of greatness. But time rolls relentlessly on and they have been called hence. For each the nation has bowed its head in sorrow. And now comes another mark in the flight of time, a strong, deep-felt sorrow; Beecher, the beloved divine and benefactor has gone to his final rest. No man among the late departed has been more sincerely mourned. No brighter intellect has cast its light upon the dark, sin-troubled paths of humanity. Few men have more firmly engrafted themselves into the hearts of their congregations. He was not sullied by those narrow traits of mind that take the charm from so many ministers of the gospel. He cast his lot among men and raised his warning voice calling on them to be christians in the broadest, noblest sense of the word. He could look beyond the limits of his own doctrinal forms and see and appreciate good in others.

He was an orator in the truest sense. His discourses for years have been considered masterpieces and read by thousands of other congregations who know him only through fame. His fine, robust person and commanding appearance secured the attention of the audience even before he spoke. But few of his sermons were prepared. Clear, logical thoughts, put forth in strong language give evidence that his