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BELLES LETTRES.

Lyre and Lancet. A Story in Scenes. By F. ANSTEY.
London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1895. 3s.

This is the second volume of "The Novel Series," and it is just the book to put into one's pocket at the seaside or on a holiday ramble. The poet, who is invited to Wyvern Court on the strength of his first volume of poems, is mistaken for the veterinary surgeon, who has just taken a first prize for his magnificent bulldog, which, oddly enough, bears the same name as the volume of poems. The endless mistakes and complications which ensue form an amusing chronicle. The poet finds himself set down with the servants, the "vet" is fêted by lords and ladies, and is almost beside himself through the contrarieties that meet him at every turn. He proves himself a really good fellow, and, though he finds his level in due course, he earns the hearty respect and good will of his host and all the party. The poet turns out to be a poor creature, and is ignominiously sent back to town. The story is improbable, but it is racy and entertaining, and it can scarcely fail to act as a counterblast to snobbery. Both the poet and his patrons are thoroughly well shown up.

The Men of the Moss-Hags. Being a History of Adventure taken from the Papers of William Gordon of Earlstoun in Galloway, and told over again by S. R. CROCKETT.
London: Isbister & Co. 1895. 6s.

Mr. Crockett, like a true Scot, has put his soul into this record of the Covenanting days. Bothwell Brig and Ayrsmoss, with all their sorrow and heroism, stand out vividly from these pages. We seem to get into the very centre of the struggle for religious freedom, to measure the brave endurance of the stout-hearted defenders of the faith, and to watch the process by which young men and maidens grew heroic as they began to understand the real issues of the controversy. Claverhouse naturally fills a prominent place in Mr. Crockett's canvas, and Wat of Lochinvar, the wonderful young swordsman, may almost claim a place beside Mr. Weyman's *Gentleman of France*. William Gordon and his elder brother, "the Bull," who cleared the chamber of the Privy Council with a great iron bar wrenched from its fastenings, are two notable figures. Maisie Lennox and her friend Kate are even more interesting studies. The book is full of adventures, and has many a pathetic record

of constancy; but perhaps the most stirring page of all is the story of Margaret Wilson, who was tied to a stake on the shore at Wigtown. There is nothing finer in the book than this noble record of a girl's constancy. Mr. Crockett's tale sets all one's pulses tingling, and throws a fresh halo about a story which can never cease to attract every friend of religious liberty.

Scott. By RICHARD H. HUTTON.

Burns. By PRINCIPAL SHAIRP.

Coleridge. By H. D. TRAILL.

Macmillan & Co. 1895.

Whatever our recommendation can do to promote the circulation of a valuable literary work, adapted for universal circulation, we should like to be done for this volume. No finer or more wholesome literary subject and example can be found, we think, than the life of Scott; and Mr. Hutton has been a student of Scott and his writings for a lifetime, and possesses no ordinary competence as a critic and writer for the work which here he has so lovingly done. Principal Shairp's dealing with the difficult and delicate subject of Burns is admirable—admirable, among other reasons, because he has nowhere allowed his appreciation of Burns' genius to blind him to the vices and faults of his life, although he touches these with the restraint, the delicacy, the gentleness, which he has here proved may be combined with a just repugnance to the faults of the wonderfully gifted poet. Mr. Traill also has shown excellent judgment in his treatment of Coleridge, with his special faults of character, as well as fine critical discrimination of his matchless, but yet largely inoperative, genius and intellect. The publication of Coleridge's Letters, which we review in another part of our present issue, goes to confirm and illustrate the wisdom of Mr. Traill's treatment of his subject.

We have received three story books from the Wesleyan Book Room, which are attractively got up and well illustrated. *What They Couldn't* is one of Pansy's healthy tales, full of Americanisms, and often in need of pruning, but withal spicy, bright, full of high moral teaching. It is a story about young people and their temptations, which all young folk will find entertaining and profitable. *Pink Roses* and *With a Gladsome Mind* are two volumes of stories by Margaret S. Haycraft, sure to be read and enjoyed. They are fresh, vigorous, and full of happy lessons.

Passages in the Life of a Galley-Slave. Translated from the French by M. Betham-Edwards.—This is one of the valuable

and attractive cheap series of popular books published by Messrs. Blackie. It narrates the sufferings of a young Frenchman, Jean Mortellhe, of Bergerae, one of the victims of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, condemned to the galleys because of his religion. It was originally translated from the French by no less a writer than Oliver Goldsmith, but is printed here in a conveniently abridged form. Captain Marryat's *Poor Jack* is a sea story written in his best style, and Harriet Martineau's *Feats on the Fiords* gives a capital introduction to Norwegian life and customs. This series cannot be too widely known. Every book is a treasure for young readers.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Vedic India. By LENAIDE A. RAGOZIN. London and New York : J. Fisher Unwin. 1895. 5s.

This volume of the "Story of the Nations" has been prepared for by the volumes of the same series from the pen of the same writer on Chaldea, Assyria, Media, Babylon and Persia. The title is not very felicitously phrased, as given in full, *Vedic India, as Embodied Principally in the Rig-Veda*, is not a perfectly lucid description. The author, however, is not an Englishman, and, if he sometimes fails in idiomatic quality, he yet possesses great learning and writes on a subject of which he has made himself master. A few of our readers will not even now have forgotten the Rev. W. Arthur's *Mission to the Mysore*, though it was written fifty years ago. That instructive and eloquent volume was, we believe, the first book in the English language in which an account was given, at once scholarly and popular, of the Ayrian ancestors of the Brahmins and of the Vedic religion of India. We may add that, in a review of that book, contributed to the *Biblical Review* (a well known and valued Congregationalist periodical of that generation), the first attempt was made, so far as we know, to furnish an account of the *Religion of India*, that should be at once scientific and popular, founded upon a first hand study of one of the *Vedas*,—the *Sanhitá* of the Sama-Veda having then recently been translated into English. The writer of that article was a Wesleyan minister, still living. The present volume is founded on a still more important Veda, the Rig-Veda, but there is a close and very interesting correspondence between the results of the analysis of the Sama-Veda published in the *Biblical Review* in 1848, and of the analysis of the Rig-Veda, as given in the