

learning, humor, clear insight, an auto-crazy of language scarcely less than Rabelais's own, and more than probably a little touch of madness, he had shown his fitness for the task before he undertook it. A man who in almost his first literary attempt could brand the objects of his dislike as "pristinary lobecks," gravitated to Rabelais as inevitably as the rivers flow to the sea. Born in Crumarty, Scotland, the descendant of an ancient family, and possessor of a pedigree in which was duly recorded every step of his descent from Adam, Urquhart, after studying at Aberdeen, undertook the grand tour then deemed indispensable to the education of a gentleman. He travelled on the Continent for years, collecting books, disputing theses, learning languages, and fighting duels, to come back at last to Scotland to find his paternal estate squandered and himself loaded with debt. His sympathies being royalist, he took the losing side in the civil wars, and between rapacious creditors and Cromwell's dragoons his precious books and manuscripts were swept away. But he bore a brave front against calamity, and, turning to his pen for solace, wrote books of the strangest kind, whose very titles make one stare and gasp. These are now forgotten; but in his Rabelais he has, as his editor says, "added an imperishable piece to the sum of English masterpieces."

—The violent protest of the most intelligent portion of the nation against the so-called Lex Heinze shows conclusively that the German people is still capable of rising in defence of its ideal possessions, that it has the courage to make its will known, and the power to check chaotic legislation. This proposed law, which Prof. Virchow designates as "a symptom of that malignant disease, hypocrisy," would endanger free activity in art and literature, and, naturally, among the first to oppose it are the leading artists and men of letters. But all the higher vocations were represented among the thousands who met in the various cities to utter their indignation. Among the leading speakers in Berlin, Karlsruhe, Munich, Freiburg, etc., were university professors, teachers of the gymnasias and other higher institutions, members of the legal profession (several of them Government officials), and representative men of all classes. The resolutions passed were in some cases couched in such violent language that the President of the Reichstag refused to receive them on that ground—which did not lessen their effect in the country. At Munich one of the results of the agitation was the formation of a "Goethe-Bund" (with the venerable Paul Heyse as President), whose purpose is "to protect the freedom of art and science in the German Empire against attacks of every kind . . . by the use of all legal means." In that art centre 1,000 painters and sculptors signed a declaration of their own, besides joining in the vigorous protest of the people at large. It goes without saying that the legal code of the Empire is not lacking in provisions forbidding the sale, distribution, and exhibition of indecent pictures and literature; it is not the enforcement of existing laws that has aroused the people, but a proposed extension of them which would subject works of art to the censorship of an ignorant body. What the result of

the passage of the measure would be is perhaps best indicated by an exhibit in a show window at Stuttgart, where the German flag waves over casts of the Venus of Milo and the Apollo Belvedere covered with black drapery.

—The study of ancient Japanese rituals, so patriotically begun and thoroughly accomplished during the eighteenth century by a noble succession of native Japanese scholars, and its substance reproduced in English, with original additions, by Mr. Ernest M. Satow (now British Minister in Japan) during the late seventies of this century, has been continued by Dr. Karl Florenz, Professor of Philology and German Literature in the University of Tokio. Dr. Florenz's paper on Ancient Japanese Rituals fills some "hat over a hundred pages in Part I., volume xxviii., of the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, dated December, 1899, and just to hand. The delay in publication has been justified by the insertion in the text of illustrations, both plain and colored, which give a vivid idea of the simplicity and significance of the ceremonies still continued in the Imperial Palace and at certain Shinto shrines. These, as we can testify, are very impressive. It is very evident that, in Shinto, the idea of sin never advanced much further than that of outward ceremonial pollution. Incidentally, it is shown that in these rituals lay the germ of a system of criminal law, the quiet national development of which was obstructed by the introduction of the Chinese penal code of the Tang Dynasty, promulgated in Japan A. D. 701. Dr. Florenz also proves that this ritual system of purification, in many instances specially enacted and compulsory, was made the vehicle for a widely extended system of "squeezes" in the interest of oppressive and corrupt people, both in and out of office. The paper is very valuable as throwing light also on the various systems of witchcraft which in theory and practice are still so general among the common people, especially in the rural parts of the empire. Dr. Florenz's paper is characterized by profound insight and accuracy, joined with wide learning and mastery of the archaic as well as modern forms of the Japanese language. Prof. Basil Hall Chamberlain contributes a note, with two fine illustrations, showing both the cock and the hen of the long-tailed variety of fowls in Tosa. This breed is believed to be at least one hundred years old. The body feathers, which sometimes fall off in moulting, reach the length of four feet, but the tail feathers, which do not moult, are from eight to eighteen feet in length. In Tosa, the price of a cock, with feathers under ten feet, is under ten dollars, and ranges, according to the feather's length, from fifteen to twenty-five dollars. A good hen can be bought for a dollar and a half. Kobe prices are higher.

GROSSETESTE.

Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln. By Francis Seymour Stevenson. Macmillan Co. 1899. 8vo, pp. 348.

The beauty of a little volume, entitled "Historic Personality," that appeared in 1893 may bring it to the recollection of some of our readers. Its author was this same Mr. Stevenson. It was a book to be confidently recommended to persons suffering from aneurism of the aorta, to whom

the smallest excitement might prove instantly fatal. To our apprehension, and we actually read it, it was an examination of the efficiency of the different means which a modern reader can use in order to recover an idea of the personality—the characteristic mental flavor, if we may say so—of any historic figure. That the author devoted thought enough to that problem to write a book about it, even if it was not a remarkably vigorous production, before he actually undertook a biography, will certainly predispose his former readers to sit down to the present work with appetite; and from the Addisonian style of the earlier writing they will expect to find his pen now gliding along as smoothly as a canal-boat. In truth, it moves somewhat quicker now, without always stopping to choose a classical word. Expressions such as "Grosseteste was not popular with the King," the displacement by "state" everywhere of "assert," and the like, seem not to annoy the denizens of a humid Isle whose sky is never very bright and where nerves grow rank. The pen is impelled by a purpose now, an animating one. The reader certainly cannot but become mightily impressed with the historic personality of this Robert of Lincoln, who, in the first half of the thirteenth century, when the conception of truth was but half-developed, had such a dominating sense of the reality of facts, especially of the deeper facts of human life, as to shake every man that came near him into earnestness and reverence. It is startling to come across in that age his two maxims, never to accept a sentence from an authority without taking account of its relation to the entire substance of the book from which it is quoted, and never definitively to accept any statement of natural fact without having tried the experiment to see whether it be really so. Very modern, too, was his reply when accused of acting without precedent: "Every new thing that instructs and advances a man is a thing fraught with new blessing." His very style reflects his sense of truth, so weighty is it and so free from the exaggerations and flamboyances of contemporary writing. Here is a fair specimen translated by Mr. Stevenson:

"I know that the perils of an exalted station are neither few nor inconsiderable. I know its pitfalls, how hard it is to repress pride, how rare is the sense of one's own weakness, how easy it is to feel contempt for others, how difficult to adapt oneself to the needs of the weaker brethren; it is the shadow of power, and the reality of servitude. I know also from experience, and still suffer from the knowledge, how many thorns there are in riches, how many occasions they afford for acting wrongly, how often they are misused, how true it is that they impoverish instead of enriching their possessors, and how those same possessors, who are really themselves owned by the wealth of which they are the reputed owners, find their intellects blinded and rendered torpid and dormant."

The see of Lincoln, to which he was soon after raised, was in those days one of the richest in Christendom.

In his early years, before the star of Albertus Magnus had culminated, he was acknowledged to be the greatest scholar and philosopher in Europe, pitiable as it is now to consider in what that pitch of learning consisted. He was a man of rare urbanity, refinement, and cultivation. All this must have disposed him to sympathize with the Benedictines and other monks, both as against the friars and as

against the secular clergy. The people, too, loved the monks, and he was sprung from the lowliest of the people. But, to his eye, the moral well-being of the commonalty of England was an object so immensely greater than any learning could be, whether in theology or in other science, that he seemed to the monks to be systematically persecuting them, so insistent was he that their duties to the common people should be done. He was sedulous to invite educated men to his diocese; and perhaps half-a-dozen cases might even to-day be specified in which he made allowances to young men from his private purse to enable them to take the course in theology at Oxford preparatory to receiving livings under him. The large amounts of such allowances are notable, by the way. He wished them not only to live, but to live respectably. Yet when William of Cerdas repelled to his invitation that he was giving a course of lectures in theology at Paris, and therefore could not come, Grosseteste, after praising his zeal for teaching, reminded him that "Our Lord said to the chief of the apostles, 'If thou lovest Me, feed My sheep,' not 'If thou lovest Me, lecture from a professor's chair to the shepherds of My sheep.' The pastoral office is of more importance than the professional." Matthew Paris hated Grosseteste with a true monkish hatred, letting slip no opportunity to tell an anecdote to his disadvantage. Yet the chronicler's reverence for the Bishop, and manifest sense of his superiority to other men, are the best possible evidence of the greatness of his personality.

Another respect in which Grosseteste was superior to his age was in not believing in the sanctity of squalor. He was a hearty friend to the mendicant orders—with the Franciscans, quite bound up from the time when they landed just as his more active life was beginning at fifty years of age. He had welcomed the Dominicans four years earlier. Nothing angered him more than to see a friar cutting a dash in fine raiment and luxury. He was well acquainted with poverty, and knew its sweet uses. But he equally knew the utility of the comforts of life. When the Franciscans built a house in Oxford, he vainly urged them to consider sanitary conditions. With all his inflexible sternness where the well-being of the people was attacked, and though he had proved himself man enough to return almost to penury from wealth upon a point of conscience that he held to be doubtful, he wished his clergy to live well, and expended the reservoirs of his tremendous energy to bring that state of things to pass. "Three things," he said to a Black Friar, "are generally necessary to salvation temporal—food, sleep, and good humor." He once borrowed the Countess of Leicester's cook, and, concluding that a good table was more important to his position than to hers, asked leave to retain the man permanently, to which she responded, like the great lady she was, that were her servants good enough she would rejoice at any opportunity of placing them all at his disposal. Having once occasion to impose penance upon an ascetic, he directed him to drink a cup of Burgundy, and told him that if he would often undergo the same mortification he would have a better ordered conscience.

His courage never found its limit. An accomplished diplomatist, he ever preferred an arrangement to a quarrel, but not al-

ways to the postponement of a quarrel. There can be little doubt, we think, contrary to Mr. Stevenson's opinion, that upon one occasion he bargained with the Pope that he, as Bishop of Lincoln, should favor and aid in the collection of an almost intolerable tax upon the English church, in return for a decision in his favor of a process before the papal court. We think there can be little doubt of this, for the reason that it is as plain now as it was then to all parties, that the decision would infallibly be rendered in favor of the one who offered the higher bribe. But the truth was that, notwithstanding the burden upon his clergy, and notwithstanding his intense disgust with a Pope and court that could comprehend no motive but cupidity, that which he agreed to do as a part of a bargain he would have felt obliged to do in any case, since the very existence of the papacy was in imminent danger from the atheist emperor, Frederic II. A little later, however, he drew up a scathing memorial setting forth, without extenuation or palliation, all the injury to the Church and the papacy worked by the iniquities of Rome. He appeared before the Pope and his chief counselors, and caused this plain exposure to be read to their faces, leaving also copies of it on file. He well knew, of course, that he thus made a deadly enemy of every man who heard him except the Pope himself, who, though he was as bad as the rest, could easily see that his own bread was not buttered on the side of corruption. Nor was this by any means an isolated instance of his courage.

We cannot here mention other interesting traits now first brought before the general reader in this biography. Nothing at all is said about Robert's personal appearance. The author is even in doubt whether he had a large head or not, saying that a signature "Master Robert Grosseteste" seems to imply that it was a family name. He allows the insignificant fact thus inferred (if it be a fact) to obscure from his mental view the significant circumstance that two writers who had seen him many times, and one at least who may have seen him, took it for granted that Grosseteste was a personal appellation. If they were in error as to how he came by the name, their assumption all the more proves that his head was large, since they would otherwise certainly have inquired why he had been so called. It is inconceivable, for instance, that his devoted disciple, Roger Bacon, should have continued through the long residue of his master's life after first meeting him, and subsequently to his death, to style him "Robertus dictus Grosseteste"—"Grosseteste" being, in truth, merely his family name—unless there was something in his personal appearance to confirm Bacon in the erroneous impression that it was a to-name. The only other thing we learn of his person is that his body was frail. If Mr. Stevenson's reader begins by vaguely figuring him as a sort of Napoleon, he will have a rough-hewn image that, after a good deal of subsequent shaping, as acquaintance ripens, will represent pretty well his "historic personality." He was a natural master of men and an administrator with both *coup d'œil* and capacity for details. He went to the heart of every practical problem, and almost invariably managed to have his way, as far as the nature of things allowed. In his anger he struck

terror into all around him, while he charmed whomsoever he wished to charm. On the other hand, he was no actor, but most intensely sincere; he was on his guard against applause, outward and inward; he accurately foresaw the natural course of events; he knew perfectly what things are desirable; and he lived to a ripe old age, which one can scarcely conceive Napoleon as doing.

Grosseteste's public career began with his elevation to the episcopate in 1235, when he was over sixty years old, and continued till his death in 1253. For this period Mr. Stevenson's narrative was compiled without much difficulty from a few books. No material doubt can hang over any part of it, and nothing of importance can well have been omitted. It is, therefore, not open to criticism, except in minutiae. The part of Grosseteste's life before 1235 is mainly that of a scholar. It could be adequately treated only by a person critically versed in the learning of that age, after a diligent study of all the works of Grosseteste. Such treatment it still awaits. Moreover, in the present state of our information, a large proportion of the facts of this division of Grosseteste's life, including all the principal dates, must remain conjectural. We cannot think that Mr. Stevenson has used great logical power in drawing his inferences from the few data we possess.

SEVEN NOVELS.

Geber: A Tale of the Reign of Harun al Raschid, Khalif of Baghdad. By K. A. Benton. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

A Danvers Pioneer. By Rowland E. Robinson. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Poor People. By I. K. Friedman. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Kennedy of Glenhaugh. By David MacLure. New York: The Mershon Co.

Enoch Willoughby. By James A. Wickersham. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Dracon Bradbury. By Edwin Asa Dix. The Century Company.

The Harp of Life. By Elizabeth Godfrey. Henry Holt & Co.

There are two tragedies in the history of the Muslim world that still touch its heart to the deepest and thrill its imagination to the highest. The one is the death at Kerbela of al-Husayn, the Well-Beloved, slain in battle against hopeless odds, and now praised and mourned in a yearly passion-play. The other is the fall of the Barmecides, the horror of which has never passed from Islam or from the memory of Harun the Just. In the second, added to the horror, lies a mystery unread to this day. Harun himself said to his favorite sister, "If I thought that my shirt knew it, I would tear it in pieces." "Geber" is Mrs. K. A. Benton's attempt to read this mystery. It is a woman's reading and may be true; it has an adequacy which none of the other suggestions approaches. We will not spoil the book by telling its secret here, for the story as a story can be well commended. It is true that the people in it "thou" one another overmuch, and have a large utterance not by any means of the early gods. But the pictures are clear and bright; the figures, if we cannot say the characters, are distinct; the Oriental color is abundant, put on with the palette-knife and rubbed in with the finger. The life of the time in the court of