

well how to employ, and for the rest the book is composed of little but description and dialogue of the most everyday character. In this dialogue the author is at a disadvantage from his apparent inability to reproduce bygone fashions of conversation. Certainly no people in England, at the time all England was arming to the teeth to resist the projected invasion of Napoleon, talked or expressed their thoughts in the way the people in this book do. No people could talk so who were not thoroughly familiar with the verse and prose of the nineteenth century, and there was not yet time for this at the period of the story. Festus Derriman's oaths and braggadocio have a somewhat antique flavor, but even Festus's language is a jumble of old and new. Notwithstanding these defects the book has the charm of all Mr. Hardy's novels, in presenting a pleasing picture. The characters may be artificially drawn, but they stand out in distinct relief from the canvas. Their grouping is pleasing to the eye, their action natural. The puzzle is how any writer with the delicacy of perception and touch possessed by Mr. Hardy can in detail betray so much want of perception. It is impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion that a great deal of this unevenness in Mr. Hardy's style comes from carelessness; but whatever the cause, the result is a jar almost like that produced by discords in music. There is, by the way, a constant suggestion both of pictorial and musical effect in Mr. Hardy's writing; his descriptions bring things vividly before the eye, while at the same time he is fond of making the last note of expression vibrate for the ear. The result is a style peculiar to the point of eccentricity—a style at times natural to flatness, and again artificial to a degree that can only be characterized as affectation. Whether such novels are liked or not must depend a good deal upon individual taste. There is much in them to please an educated taste, just as there is much in them to repel the ordinary reader.

In reviewing, some time since, the 'Wreck of the *Grosvenor*,' in these columns, we expressed the opinion that the book must have been written by a thorough seaman. Mr. Russell now says in his preface that the very last misgiving he had was that the accuracy of the story would be questioned, and adds that he has passed eight years of his life at sea in the merchant service, and therefore thinks that his critics should admit the probability that he knows what he is writing about. He vouches for the truth of all the incidents related in the 'Wreck of the *Grosvenor*,' and assures us that there is nothing in 'A Sailor's Sweetheart' that is not equally true. We are perfectly willing to take his word for it, for, startling as many of the events are, the most noticeable thing about both the books is the accent of truth which pervades them. The difference between the two novels is still very great. We cannot imagine 'A Sailor's Sweetheart' ever exciting the interest which the author's first story did, and this mainly for reasons which have nothing to do with the accuracy or probability of the narrative. The really remarkable thing about the first story was the manner in which the interest was sustained from the first to the last. It was a connected, coherent, and complete tale of peril and adventure at sea, and for ourselves we confess to having found it impossible to lay the book down after having once taken it up. This literary excellence was so strongly marked that we were misled into supposing that the author had entirely concealed himself behind the character who was made the narrator, and that he must be as accomplished a writer as he evidently was a seaman. 'A Sailor's Sweetheart,' however, shows that this is not the case, but that Mr. Russell has very much to learn in the art of novel-writing. The interest is not sustained at all. There are plenty of startling and sensational incidents, the madness of Captain Flanders is graphically described, and the incident of the water-logged brig has all of the vividness of reality, but the story as a story does not possess a continuous interest. And, besides this, Mr. Russell has apparently made the mistake of imagining that his forte is that of a writer of love-stories. This was the one weakness betrayed in the 'Wreck of the *Grosvenor*,' and this weakness is exaggerated to a sickening point in 'A Sailor's Sweetheart.' Helen Williams is a most admirable woman and made of the right stuff for a sailor's wife, but there is a great deal too much of her. With all its drawbacks, however, 'A Sailor's Sweetheart' will be found a good story, and we confidently recommend it to the nautical critic of one of our esteemed contemporaries who devoted a good deal of valuable time a year or two ago to showing that the author of the 'Wreck of the *Grosvenor*' knew nothing about the navigation of ships.

While there is a strong family resemblance between all the stories of Jules Verne, there is an immense variety in his plots. This is partly owing to the fact that he draws upon all the stores of modern science, supplemented and corrected by a peculiarly vivid imagination. In his last novel the scene is laid in China, and the adventures are those of a Chinese gentleman, Kin-Fo by name. Kin-Fo is young, wealthy, and engaged to the beautiful La-Oo. He has, however, never had a great misfortune, and, consequently, has never known the full meaning of life. This vital psychological defect is made known to him by Wang, a philosopher, through whom Kin-Fo is in the end to learn the secret of the great riddle. At the opening of the story he learns that the

Central Bank of California, in which all his property is invested, has failed, and he is consequently almost a beggar. Proceeding to the office of the Centenarian Fire and Life Insurance Company with his remaining loose cash, he purchases a policy in this company for \$200,000, the risk covering suicide, which he very frankly informs the company he proposes to commit. Securing \$50,000 to the philosopher Wang, and \$150,000 to La-Oo, Kin-Fo prepares for death, determining, however, to die in such a way as to procure for himself the utmost emotion possible. He therefore explains to his friend Wang the situation of affairs, and begs that philosopher to kill him without any previous warning. This commission Wang undertakes, but shortly afterward disappears. At the same time the news comes that the Central Bank has not failed, and Kin-Fo now desires to live as much as he had formerly desired to die. The insurance company has been from the first anxious to preserve his life, and has deputed two spies to watch over and preserve him at all hazards in the interest of the corporation. Great publicity is given to the matter, Kin-Fo becomes a noted character, and, accompanied by the two spies, starts out on a voyage of discovery after Wang. In the end Kin-Fo, after incredible adventures, finds Wang, his life is saved, he marries La-Oo, and everything ends happily. The author has introduced into his story the Boyton life-saving suit and the phonograph, which appears as a customary means of correspondence in China. There is no limit to Jules Verne's audacity, and his popularity shows how little people care for scientific accuracy in fiction. The French have always been famous for their ignorance of foreign countries, and at one time were noted for their indifference to reality in romance; but Jules Verne's audience is quite as much English and American as French, and the secret of his popularity with Anglo-Saxon readers is, we fancy, simply to be found in their universal love of stories of adventure.

The Power of Movement in Plants. By Charles Darwin, LL.D., F.R.S., assisted by Francis Darwin. With illustrations. (London: John Murray, 1880.)—Let no one be misled by his memory of the great run of 'The Origin of Species' and 'The Descent of Man' into the supposition that the present volume is a book for popular reading and dinner-table discussion. It is interesting and curious in its way, but it is a strictly scientific treatise, the record of a vast number of experiments contrived with characteristic ingenuity for eliciting decisive answers to critical questions—experiments conducted with immense patience, and described in this volume with a particularity and iteration which may well be tiresome to the non-professional reader. Let such, however, give their attention to the introduction and the summaries, and they will find that the seemingly simple and dull annals of plant-life, when explored by a master, abound in curious and moving incidents, many of them till now unnoticed. They will learn that most simple structures suffice for varied, complex, and wondrous actions; that the tiny root of a seedling, in addition to what was thought to be its only and passive instinct for growing downward, exhibits at least three different and independent kinds of movement: that the initial stemlet rising out of the ground continually circumnates—to use Darwin's well-chosen word; that, besides this general bowing of stem in all directions, there is a special bending, in most cases toward the light (heliotropism), in some away from it; while, again, certain stems and most roots respond in a mysterious way to the influence of gravitation and turn earthward (geotropism); that almost all leaves, even seed-leaves, circumnate, at least when young, and some keep up their gyratory exercises quite to old age; that shoot and leaf-stalk and the stalk of leaflet move independently, either in conjunction or otherwise; that the changes of position correlated with day and night—as in what is called the sleep of plants and their waking—and both the movements and the special sensitiveness exhibited by climbing plants (so ably investigated by Mr. Darwin in a former volume) are only specialized modifications and more extensive, or at least more conspicuous, exhibitions of faculties which every seedling is now known to manifest.

"If we look, for instance, at a great acacia-tree, we may feel assured that every one of the innumerable growing shoots is constantly describing small ellipses, as is each petiole, subpetiole, and leaflet. . . . If we could but look beneath the ground, and our eyes had the power of a microscope, we should see the tip of each rootlet endeavoring to sweep small ellipses or circles, as far as the pressure of the surrounding earth permitted. All this astonishing amount of movement has been going on year after year since the time when, as a seedling, the tree first emerged from the ground."

Indeed, the root-tip of a seedling—quite out of all ordinary expectation or surmise—is most richly endowed with faculties of a sort which were until recently held to be exclusively animal. Our author says:

"We believe that there is no structure in plants more wonderful, as far as its functions are concerned, than the tip of the radicle. If the tip be lightly pressed or burnt or cut, it transmits an influence to the upper adjoining part, causing it to bend away from the affected side; and, what is still more surprising, the tip can distinguish between a slightly harder and a softer object by which it is simultaneously pressed on opposite sides. If, however, the radi-

'A Sailor's Sweetheart: An Account of the Wreck of the Sailing-ship *Waldershare*. From the Narrative of Mr. William Lee, Second Mate. By W. Clark Russell.' New York: Harper & Bros.
'The Tribulations of a Chinaman. By Jules Verne. Translated by Ellen E. Frewer. Illustrated by I. Bennett.' New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1881.

cle is pressed by a similar object a little above the tip, the pressed part does not transmit any influence to the more distant parts, but bends abruptly towards the object. If the tip perceives the air to be moister on one side than on the other, it likewise transmits an influence to the upper adjoining part, which bends toward the source of moisture. When the tip is excited by light . . . the adjoining part bends from the light; but when excited by gravitation the same part bends towards the centre of gravity."

Add to these movements the circumnutation of rootlets (which Darwin elaborately demonstrates and describes, and by which the growing tip turns or presses to all sides in succession), and, after reading the summary account of the part which these various movements play in the economy of the plant (when as a seedling it is subjected to perhaps its most severe struggle for life and needs the most prompt and perfect possible adaptation to its conditions), consider that "the course pursued by the radicle must be determined by the tip," and we shall perhaps be led to agree with the author in his suggestion of what at first would seem to be the most fanciful analogy—viz., "that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the tip of the radicle, thus endowed and having the power of directing the movements of the adjoining parts, acts like the brain of one of the lower animals." Here let us note a characteristic difference between Mr. Darwin's views and conclusions and those of the modern school of vegetable physiologists, of which Sachs is the leader. This school is disposed to attribute all such actions as are manifested in obedience to gravitation, light, etc., as direct mechanical consequences of these agencies. Mr. Darwin concludes—we suppose more wisely—"that light, or the alternations of light and darkness, gravitation, etc., . . . do not directly cause the movement; they merely lead to a temporary increase or diminution of those spontaneous changes in the turgescence of the cells which are already in progress." And, more pointedly: "Gravity does not appear to act in a more direct manner on a radicle than it does on any lowly organized animal, which moves away when it feels some weight or pressure." Darwinism is nothing if not teleological; and our author shows that "in almost every case [even in the nyctotropic, or so-called sleeping, state of leaves] we can clearly perceive the final purpose or advantage of the several movements." We cannot tarry to point them out.

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Talking about authors, and giving elaborate criticisms of them and their works, amounts to very little until the student has already some familiarity with them. Any such study, to be profitable, must be at first hand, must be directed primarily to the authors themselves. The text-book can afford little more than a sketch of their lives and principal works; and the more personal this is, the more abounding in characteristic incident, the better it will accomplish the end in view. The thing to be done is to study the authors themselves; but it is notorious how unsatisfactory "elegant extracts" are as illustrations of authors. They are like the brick which "Scholastics" carried about as a specimen of his house. And if they are very unsatisfactory in one's native literature (we do not say they are not indispensable, and at any rate better than nothing, or than mere talk about the authors), how much more when they are strained through the medium of a foreign tongue, as must be the case in the history of any foreign literature. The student does not know whether he is reading Homer or Pope. In any case the rule should be to talk as little as possible about the authors, but to let them speak for themselves. Here is Mr. Morris's principal fault; his introductions are too long and discursive. There is too much of such generalizing as: "Thought dawned upon mankind in the form of imaginative wonders and terrors" (p. 27). Perhaps it does; but this is too far away from the concrete literature of the Greeks and Romans to warrant introducing it into so compendious a treatise as this.

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| Almanach de Gotha, 1881. | (B. Westermann & Co.) |
| Carter (A. G. W.), The Old Court-House. | (Peter G. Thomson) \$2 50 |
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| Magazine of American History, Vols. IV, V. | (A. S. Barnes & Co.) |
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