THE ACADEMY.

327

Scotland of Mary Stuart "is headed “Learning and Letters,” but wanders rather widely from its text. It is readable enough, though the literary criticism which it contains is not very novel. The author accepts the untenable notion that “Christ’s Kirk on the Green” is by James I., though he admits that the existing poem can only be a modernised version. Oddly enough, the current number of *Macmillan* has fallen into the same error.

“A Talk beside Ulleswater” is a clever dialogue on the pathetic of death-scenes as described by Camden in his History of England, with the Cavendish number of *Macmillan*.

The number concludes with two political articles, “Europe versus England,” by “Diplomates,” and Lord Brabourne’s rejoinder to Mr. Gladstone’s criticisms on his article of last month.

*Macmillan* this month has no very striking article. An anonymous sketch of the late Master of Trinity is interesting, though it does not contain many of the good stories which the subject might lead one to expect. Mr. J. Logie Robertson’s account of the cheeses of Ramsey is very pleasant. “The Protectorate of Foreloung,” by Mr. H. D. Traill, relates how the simple-minded Herr Wolkenkopf, German consul in Foreloung, together with the representatives of England and France at “the game he did not understand.” Under the title of “New Lamps for Old Ones,” Mr. W. L. Courtney protests against recent changes at Oxford. The mission of Oxford, in his view, is to supply a “corrective to modern tendencies”; and she is unfaithful to her calling if she yields to the clamorous demands of Science. The three meals, however, are probably headed “An Alexandrian Age” is an indictment of the literary characteristics of our own epoch. The analogy suggested in the title of the article is undoubtedly, to some extent, a true one, and the writer makes some good points, but his criticism is too one-sided. We must not forget to mention an article on “The Poetry of the Spanish People,” though the verse translations which accompany the quotations seldom give an adequate idea of their beauty.

A very angular essay on “St. Paul from a Jewish point of view,” by Dr. Schiller-Szeisy, forms a scarcely welcome variety in this month’s number. It may at least have had the merit of being stimulating. It seems to be a book which contains nothing indelicate or immoral; in fact, the whole MS. is exceptionally pure. Moreover, the MS., as far as I can see, has never been used at all. I am the more anxious about this matter as the November fogs will drive me from England, and I want to finish the extract before winter sets in, which can be done only by the co-operation of Dr. Steingass.

“I have the honour to be, sir, with the most perfect respect,” by Richard F. Burton.

Dr. R. Rost, Chief Librarian India Office.

As nearly a month has elapsed without my receiving any reply, I directed the following to the vice-chancellor of the university, Rev. Dr. Bellamy:


Sir,—I have the honour to submit to you the following details:

On September 13, 1866, I wrote to Dr. Rost, Chief Librarian India Office, an official letter requesting him to apply to the Curators of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, for the temporary transfer of a manuscript (the World’s only text of the *Aquinas Nights*) to the library of the India Office, there to be kept under special charge of the chief librarian. I am now sending you seven volumes. I wanted only one or two at a time. I understand not to keep them long, and, further, I pledged myself not to translate tales which might be offensive to respectable society.

Thus, I did not apply for a personal loan, which, indeed, I should refuse on account of the expense. All I applied for was a safe and temporary transfer of a work, vol. by vol., from one public library to another.

My official letter was forwarded at once by Dr. Rost, but this was the only expulsive step. On Saturday, September 25, the curators could form no quorum, the same thing took place on Saturday, October 9, and there is an expletive step. The same will take place on Saturday, October 23.

I am acquainted with many of the public libraries of Europe, but I know of none that subscribe to that kind of moral way of obtaining articles of science.

The best authorities inform me that until June, 1856, the signatures of two curators enabled the librarian to borrow a manuscript; but that since June a meeting of all three curators has been required, and that a lesser number does not form a quorum.

I am requested to suggest that the statute upon the subject of borrowing books and manuscripts urgently calls for revision.

I have the honour to be, sir, with the most perfect respect,

Richard F. Burton.

The Vice-Chancellor, Oxford.

The curators presently met and the following was the result:—

Mon., Nov. 1, 1866.

Dear Sir Richard Burton,—The curators considered your application on Saturday, Oct. 30, afternoon, and the majority of them were unwilling to lend the MS.

Yours very truly,

R. F. BURTON.

The loan of MSS. from the Bodleian Library.

The following correspondence tells its own tale. I forward it to the ACADEMY not because it interests myself, but with the conviction that the peculiar proceedings of the curators, Bodleian Library, call for full publicity, and I begin with the beginning.

Yours truly,

R. F. BURTON.

Mr. J. Logie Robertson.

No. i.

"39 Dorset Street, Portman Square: Oct. 13, 1866.

Sir,—I have the honour to remind you, that on October 13, I addressed you officially requesting a temporary transfer of the Worley Montague manuscript (of *Aquinas Nights*) from the Bodleian Library to the personal care of the Librarian, India Office.

To this letter I received no reply. But on November 13th, it was informed by Mr. Lord Brabourne, that the curators had considered my application on Saturday, October 30, and the majority of them were unwilling to lend the manuscript.

The same curators at the same meeting allowed sundry manuscripts for the use of an Indian subject to be sent to the India Office.

"I cannot but protest against this invidious proceeding, and I would willingly learn what causes it.

"1. It cannot be the importance of the manuscript, which is one of the meanest known to me—a schoolboy character, most erroneous, uncorrected, and valuable only for its historical value.

"2. It cannot be any consideration of public morals, for I undertook (if the loan were granted) not to translate tales which might be considered offensive to respectable society.

"3. It cannot be its requirement for local use. The manuscript stands on a high shelf in the manuscript room, and not one man in the whole so-called "University" can read it.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

Yours obediently,

Richard F. Burton.

The Vice-Chancellor, Oxford.

Thus, as you will see by the following dates, I was kept waiting six weeks before being favoured with a refusal:

Application made on September 13 and sent on September 25, 1866.

On Saturday, September 25, 1866, neither the curators nor the vice-chancellor had been informed, as three curators were on or close to the spot.

Saturday, October 9. Again no quorum; and no action on the loan of MS. was taken.

Saturday, October 23. Three curators met and did nothing.

Saturday, October 30. Curators met and refused the loan of MS.

Upon these proceedings comment is unnecessary. I leave deductions to the common sense of your readers.

Richard F. Burton.

SELECTED FOREIGN BOOKS.

GENERAL LITERATURE.


RUMAS, L. Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Bäучsten-Architektur Italiens. Berlin: Wasmuth. 30 M,