The Academy.


The venerable Hibraïsant (and son of a famous Hibraïsant) has resumed a study he chose for himself as far back as 1848, when he edited the Pâbles de Lâkolam, and he

showes no falling-off in point of acumen or industry. This volume, published for the first time in 1888, as Les Études, under the auspices of the Minister of Public Instruction, collates no less than fifteen versions—Arabic, Hebrew, and Syriac, Greek and Latin, Italian, Spanish, and German. All students know the labour which such common and impious demands; and a literary friend writes,

"I very much doubt whether anything but love for his subject and downright enthusiasm can prompt a man to exercise that constancy and care of collation, one of the most irritating and odious of occupations, incessantly requires."

A few trivial remarks. Anon Johannes de Capua. He is supposed to have taken for text the Hebrew version of an author not certainly known, but supposed to be R. Joel, who has left nothing but a name; and the date must have been before a.d. 1500, when the Latin translation was made. There is another Hebrew version by R. Jacob ben Eleazar (thirteenth century), compiler of a compendium of the laws of caring for the ORPHANS, in the language of modern Judaism, being little more than a cenotaph of Biblical verses, possessing hardly any critical value. These Denz Verzessungen hebraicae du Livre de Kallah et Dimmah (Paris, Vigney, 1881), were edited by M. Derenbourg, who gives the text, together with critical notes, but no translation.

Johannes de Capua, who so naively relates his conversion to Christianity, flourished about the end of the thirteenth century; not earlier than 1279 (De Sacy). We find that he was moved to undertake the "presens opusculum, in honorem domini Mathei, diei et apostolici sedis gratia titulis Sancto Maria in portico diamoncivaria," by Matteo de Rossi (Mathaues de Rubris), nephew of Nicholas III, was created cardinal-deacon by Urban IV. in 1292 or 1293; he was made archbishop of St. Peter by his uncle (about 1278), and protector of the Frates Minores in 1279; and the non-nobles of these communities in the thirteenth century. Proclus explains De Sacy's limitation. The Capuan's Latin version is a clumsy and servile reproduction of the original, and nothing is easier than to render it into vulgar Aramaic, e.g., "Dixit Kallah: Quomodo fuit illud? Inquit Dimmah," &c. (Kol Kallah: Kayf hazi? Kol Dimmah, &c.). So "Quid est?" (p. 61) "ayah hazi?"

For this reason it has an especial value in the eyes of the critical reader. And the matter of the Directorium is far superior to the manner, otherwise it would not have bogged a host of European versions—German, Danish, Dutch, Spanish, Italian (old and new), French, and English. The Greek of Simon de Raphael, L. 43, contains the Prologs interprétés, Abdash, Iaamacoa (A. A. Khallikian, p. 43), he translated from the Pahvli, and adapted another source. This ends with "Explicit prologus, inscriptum.

"Dicitur quod in tempore regum Edom [i.e., Nabathan, comp. Lingua Edomica], p. 100, where an Episcopalian bows to Amasai (cf. Amos 1:14; 2:12). This may not, while Mr. W. Wright's work is everywhere cited, the excellent "Kallah and Dimmah" of his C. 634, and of the present annual (p. 22).

Seth, an M.D. in the days of Alexius Comnenus Emperor (a.d. 1081-1183), gave rise to the Slavonian and the Greek versions.

The debased Latinity of Johannes de Capua, e.g., cap. viii, De Murillo (La Belette, the weasel), shows clear traces of the writer's mother tongue. Such are, "vano aeternum quinque milia annos taceant," libro considerande debet ad quod factus est (p. 5): "Et scit quoniam liber ibi habet duas intentiones" (p. 6): "Cogitavit alter eorum cambiare [tel. cambiare] porciem" (p. 7): "In novum argumentum regis" (p. 22): "Vide, dixi, ex quo non inveni ubi possim appendi (sigopigiae) non est melius quam permanere in leges parentum eruditorum" (p. 23): "Et prorecta rasonarium versus ilam" (p. 56): "Non vidi tibi honum, omnium mittere pro Senebha" (p. 69): "Momordit eum elpeus dentibus (!) in multa locis" (p. 76): "Sedite vos in loco vostro" (p. 77): "Et exurgens ivit ad apotearcinium" (p. 95): "Accepisse de argento" (p. 95): "Et si asseverati tócis" (p. 95). The book contains much of a Neapolitan peasant; while "Rectorias cor murmum" (p. 135) is the modern arabo "Irakhd.

Despite a few longuesana fastidiousness, this compendium of ancient lore is justly, indeed, entitled a Directorium; and its homely lessons still bear repetition. Such are, "Dicitnum capite sapiens; quoniam non dedit sapientem abundare in aliqo nisi in sapientia" (p. 7): "Scientia est enim aetemit arbor, culus fructus est operatio; et the insinuating power of the truth that the ignorant ever hate the learned, fools the wise, bad the good, and depraved the righteous (p. 98). "Hoc tempus" (p. 135) is巡视ably rated and revered, as if it were the later nineteenth century. e.g., "Saw", the sageness of the vulgar, are scattered profusely about the book. In p. 107 we have the truth brought out by debate "like fire from flint": "The more you stir it the worse the stove" heros "Sic tuens reiudicis et tecum quae magis fugitam habes tuae sui malo odorum sensunt" (p. 107). "Charity begins at home" — Quicumque non beneficet sibi alteri beneficet: "Sicence givens consent" — Qui tam est affirmat (p. 112). "Vulnera lingua non sunt ad nos occar scissae" (p. 176) is the modern French: "L'amour propre offense ne perdons jamais, and the Arabian saw:

"There is healing for hurts of the fire and the steel, But the hurts of the tongue—they may never heal."

Physiognomy (p. 121), the Somite "I'm al-Rishie" teaches us to avoid the man whose left eye is smaller than his right; Physiology (p. 31) proves that the male embryo, which is perfected in forty days, lies with the face turned towards the mother's loins; Morality (p. 118) discovers that gold exercises a magical effect upon the mind; and Holy Poverty (p. 149) is forcibly conduced, as that man, ecclesiastical virtue, deserves. The true tone of the plain-spoken Middle Ages is everywhere apparent, but nowhere more so than in p. 124. The "mueller meretrix," with whom kings are sorrows (p. 70), is a pet subject; and a favourite exordium is, "Fuit quidam qui habet pulchrum miseremur, erat tamen

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mestrix." There is no shame shame in the tale of the monkey who, "propertly dressed in a magnum," was found with an ugly accident (p. 40) of the barber who cried to his wife, "After nasum tuum in excrement amas tuo" (p. 56); of the husband who lay under the genital bed, "dormiens in stercore" (p. 85); and of the wife who was poisoned by expulsion of the mortal powder which she had administered to her slave-girl's sleeping lover (p. 54). In Modern Egypt, as I have noted in the Nightg., a pistol takes the place of the tube. Lastly, of that Dido of Sturrow "is no improvement upon the original campaign of the Crows and the Owls.

I rejoice to see that the age of redonment has preserved its interest in the worthy old work, and that my friend, Prof. F. Klopman, of Bombay, has edited for the "Sandaka Series" (No. xxxiii.) the Hitopadees of Nariyana, that venerable successor of the Panchatantra. Had space allowed, it might have been profitable to compare the beast-fables recalled to Rex Dales (=Bahlulam) with those appearing in King Jayendra of Sindh and his Wazir Shams (=- Siddhâr, Siddâphat) of the Arabian Nights, &c. 52. My high opinion of these ancient apologies follows that of Voeltude "Quand on fait regis de d pcvres contes fait l'edu- cation, de genre humain, on les trouve bien raisonnables"; and even the advanced anthropologist will look back to them for the survivals (often of the unfittest) and the "superstitions," etymologically so called, which still linger at the bottom of all these credos. The Alexandrian Greeks were wont to call the Indians "wise of nations" from their Niti-Sastras, or systems of ethics which, based upon the beast-fable and its simple life-lesson, rose to the highest and most mystical of doctrines, such as we find in the Mortal al-Tyeyr by Farid al-Din Attâr, and in the lovely allegories of Azr al-Din-al-Mukhaddasi (G. de Tassy)—the apologue's latest and noblest developments.

Richard F. Burton.

The Unknown Madonna. By Rennell Rodd. (David Scott.)

In one of the poems in this volume Mr. Rodd tells his critics that he must not "impugn these scantly handfuls for a season's yield," for he had other fruits ripening:

"But now and then the lute is set astride,
And fancy beckons in the wandering time."

In other words, he is at the British Embassy in Berlin, and is adopting the rule of poet by profession. Yet to have published four volumes of verse since carrying off the Newdigate in 1880 can hardly be called a scantly harvest for a man who is generally occupied with practical affairs. As earlier in the same poem he tells us not to expect ten talents when only can "fall to his lot to play," Mr. Rodd certainly does not wish us to form too high an estimate of his work.

Indeed, we should anyhow have been obliged to confess that still we fail to see in Mr. Rodd's poetry the distinctive note by which his work is recognized as the ambitious poem in the book, "In Excelsis," is a failure. Mr. Rodd has taken the most difficult of all subjects—a philosophical or rather ethical poem, and has allowed himself to be carried away by the music of his instrument. Not content with following out the good Horatian advice which he gave us in Rêda—

"Be glad to live, nor care to question why—" he here has launched out again into the infinite. Trying, like Icarus, to get too near the sun of all knowledge, he has shared the fate, if not the fame, of his classical fore- runner. The rest of the book is taken up with a second series of "Poems from many Lands" and with more "Translations from Heine," some of which, however, are reprinted, without acknowledgment, from his first volume. It is a pity that Mr. Rodd has not bestowed the same careful study and polish upon this second series which he did upon the first. The subjects are, for the most part, not new, and does his treatment render them, yet and again he reaches his old standard: Take, for instance this "To F.M.C."

"Strange is it not, old friend, that you sit Howered in quiet, four garden walls your world, With birds and books and love and silence—sells fast fulfil And-grounded keel that hardly now will quit Us storms here, here sit there and write Of human passions, of the fatal fight, Of all men suffer, dream and do. Dence the face, and glorify the true!"

"While I the wanderer, I whose journey lies In stormy passages of life and sound, I with the world's throb ever beating round, Here, in that valley of storms and cries Make song of birds, weave lyric wreaths of flowers. Recall the spring's joy and the moonlit hours, And know that children's ways are more to me Than all you write of and I have to see."

Here Mr. Rodd is at his happiest; and it is noticeable that he is so in the very poem where he forgets his, surely somewhat worn-out if not affected, boast—the one with which Mr. Browning is so fond of mystifying us—that he will "keep his own soul's secret." No one expects Mr. Rodd to "sell his soul to win the crown," but we do expect him to sing of that which touches him most deeply. Yet he gives us his apology in two of his most graceful lines:

"He knows who sings what songs are of the heart How the highest notes touch silences."

Mr. Rodd seems to fall between two stools. Either he should take a great subject and treat it in the great manner, or he should leave both and give us humble themes and simple melodies. But as in Rêda he failed by taking an altogether inadequate story and treating it in the grand style, so in The Unknown Madonna he fails from taking great subjects, such as "Dante's Grave" and "Assisi," and dismissing them in a breath. "Assisi" is confessedly only an introduction; but if we cannot but think that Mr. Rodd would have done wise to wait before he gave any part of his poem to the world.

We have thought it our duty to be severe with Mr. Rodd, because from his Raleigh—

"Stray thoughts gathered on an autumn night " we had formed high expectations; expecta- tions which are more or less fulfilled in his Songs from the South. But in each succeeding volume he seems to fall more and more from his high estate. The transla-

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"Der Brief, den du geschrieben, Es macht mir so viel leid, Du willst mich nie mehr sehen Aber dein Brief ist lang."

"Zwölf sitzende, eng und störicht! Ein kleines Mädchen, Mut Man schreibt nicht so eifersüchtig Wenn man den Abgeschieden gibt."

"The latter which you sent me I read without alight. You will not love me longer, And yet, you write and write; The world is not so kind."

"To F.M.C.

"Strange is it not, old friend, that you sit Howered in quiet, four garden walls your world, With birds and books and love and silence—sells fast fulfil And-grounded keel that hardly now will quit Us storms here, here sit there and write Of human passions, of the fatal fight, Of all men suffer, dream and do. Dence the face, and glorify the true!"

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The two books of New Guinea.

Explorations and Adventures in New Guinea. By Capt. John Strachan. (Sampson Low.)


Next to Africa, no region of the globe presents so many attractions to the pioneers of science and religion as the almost continental island of New Guinea, which, notwithstanding the ever increasing expeditions of recent years, still remains the least known mass of habitable land in the world. Both English and German explorers have been fairly active in the regions of the eastern section lately appropriated by their respective governments; and here some progress has been made in geographical research, at least along the seacoast and up the numerous navigable rivers reaching the coast in inde-