

* "On the Art of Writing Fiction." One volume. (London: Wells Gardner, Darton, and Co.)

THE BRAZEN YELLOWANTIUS.†

THERE was once a very small boy who said to a man grown old in his sins, "I'm awfully fond of swearing; I know a frightful oath": and straightway he climbed that middle-aged sinner's knee and whispered him a blood-thirsty, hair-raising anathema. It seems to us as if all, or nearly all, the contributors to the *Yellow Book* know something in the swearing line that—if we may chance the vulgarism—~~can~~ give your mere Ernulphus fits. They would fain explode in yellow oaths; but though they yell their yellowest, their yellowest yell scarce surpasses a squeak of infantile blasphemy. Here is Mr. Wratismaw—we may safely say young Mr. Wratismaw—not content that he is dining at St. James's (St. James's Restaurant, though he does not say so) with the sort of person to whom some men give dinners at that "reeking, seething" place so savingly described by one of Mrs. Chant's acolytes—the bagman, we think. He must needs blare it into the ears of an amazed metropolis that he is feasting with Salome, and reminds her how "from your limbs' lascivious grace Sprang forth your splendid crime." From Mr. Arthur Symons we gather that, as we suspected, yellowness involves unwholesome hours—

We are awake so little on the earth,
And we shall sleep so long and rise so late.

Mr. Symons rose so late on the last day for sending in "copy" that his grammar got askew:—

few there be who dare
Sole with himself his single burden bear.

Miss Annie Macdonell tells, with a wild mixture of metaphors, how, when she has learned some slow wide learning and a large language, she will become a missionary dream. Even Mr. William Watson indulges in some "Meet me by moonlight alone" sentiment. The

† *The Yellow Book*. Vol. III. (London: John Lane.)

No one knows better than those who have used CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS the relief they have given when taken for liver complaint, dyspepsia, dizziness, pain in the side, constipation, disordered stomach, &c. Try them.

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PALL MALL GAZETTE

only verse in the volume that is worth reading is M. Hérédia's sonnet, which scents something of the second-hand book store, and an impressive but not perfect ballad by Mr. John Davidson, that had been all the better for the omission of some saponaceous immorality of the Larger Hope order.

For the prose: we can commend heartily Mr. Kenneth Graham's pleasant and jocular—and excellently written—extravaganza, "The Headswoman," and Miss Nora Hopper's tale, though this might have been improved by a stiffening of the flaccid simplicity of its diction. Miss Ella D'Arcy is simply vagabundant in her digressiveness, which we regret; for Miss D'Arcy has written well. The rest of the fiction is magazine-stuff of a most moderate order; all, except Mr. Beerbohm's circuitous—he would say "circumplected"—"Note on George IV." It is illustrated—may we be forgiven for using such a word—by a caricature which resembles nothing so much as a fortuitous concourse of livers and kidneys, vermicularly "implected" with intestines. It is written in the language of what Mr. Beerbohm would call pop-limbo. Yet it is "implected" with a certain cleverness, and shows, as through a glass darkly, that our fat Adonis strove to be decorative in his fat and fatuous fashion.

As for the "art" (again may we be forgiven), Mr. Beardsley, yellowest of them all, convinces us that he is by nature and intention a Presbyterian, for he successfully dodges the specially Presbyterian commandment, and makes to himself graven—no, processed—images, which are not the likeness of anything that is in the earth, nor in the water below the earth, nor in the firmament that is above the earth. He has the prudish instinct that gloats upon the festering lily, and noses after loathsomeness as some men strive after virtue. If we were the Licensing Committee, we should not have to seek far for a portrait-painter in ordinary. Mr. Philip Broughton's "Mantegna" is a clever and pleasant *singerie*, and there is some charm and some mistaken drawing in the unknown artist's "Study of a Head." Mr. Sickert is rather beneath himself, but Mr. Steer's two drawings have some wayward graciousness, despite a certain insufficiency of observation which has led to reckless drawing. Surely it was because our fathers ate themselves bloated on sour grapes in the early Victorian age that their children's teeth are thus rudely set on edge.