

A XANTHOPIATE

The Yellow Book. Vol. III. London: Lane.

Even the best of men, when he knows a good story, likes to tell it. And the writer of this review knows a good story. But he is not going to tell it. His present duty is to criticize the *Yellow Book* and he means to live up to the dignity—or impudence—of the occasion. Not that that is as easily done as you might think. He has already reviewed more *Yellow Books* than he likes to remember, for once a quarter xanthophilic or misoxanthic editors mercifully divert his attention from the pink notices on the bills with which his study is papered, till morn and noon and twilight are, as saffron in his sight. According to Mr. Jacob Poorgrass, the holy men in the days of King Noah were afflicted with a multiplying eye as they watched the animals go into the ark two by two. No wonder, then, that a mere reviewer should suffer from a most xanthocholic xanthops. One easily grows tired of the cult of the Yellow Gal who calls from these pages to the Yellow Boy as shallow calleth unto shallow. But it is not tiredness that makes a man tell a good story when he knows it.

Having tried all 'the moods and various veins of criticism' upon this chromo-gamboge xanthology, let us now review it, as the late lamented Mr. Symonds would have said, in the key of yellow. Any one who looked at Mr. Aubrey Beardsley's pictures might be excused for imagining that he was under a xanthoptical delusion. The portrait of himself, for instance, is the portrait of a spotted nightcap: the lines in 'La Dame aux Camélias' are particularly snake-like and fulvous. The truth is that Mr. Beardsley scorns to picture any person who is not suffering from xanthelasma, which is defined in the medical books as an appearance 'caused by hypertrophy of sebaceous glands and fatty degeneration of the subcutaneous connective tissue.' This extreme xanthelasma is the reason that Mr. Beardsley's figures are attenuate where you would expect plumpness, and sebacious where you would expect them to be slim. Mr. Max Beerbohm's caricature of George IV. is also hyper-sebacious: it rather resembles a study in viscera. The 'note' which accompanies it is not quite clear to the ordinary intelligence. But that is because Mr. Beerbohm's intelligence is not ordinary. Mr. George Thomson's 'Lithograph' resembles the works of the late Mr. Pettigrew. Mr. Foschter's 'Pastel' is a monstrous clever caricature of a middle-aged lady with a Bardolphian nose. People who are not yellow will like Mr. Steer's sketches, and Mr. Broughton's head of Mantegna, which may please them all the better in that it is full of pleasant reminiscences of other pictures.

Mr. Henry Harland has written a story entitled 'When I am King.' Never has the story of a man who cannot make his way in the world been told in this fashion. The tale is a singular illustration of Mr. Harland's peculiar gifts, as Mr. Herbert Crackanthorpe's 'Study in Sentimentality' is a striking illustration of Mr. Herbert Crackanthorpe's peculiar gifts. Miss Leila Macdonald's story resembles many that we have read before; but it is none the worse and none the better for that. Those who find it wearisome must remember that patience is a virtue. Miss Ella D'Arcy has done better work than 'White Magic,' though we are loth to say so. Mr. Ernest Dowson knows how to make use of the charming device known to so many short story-tellers. He begins at the beginning and leaves off in the middle: and the reader who has been interested finds himself in the position of Lord Ullin when the waters wild went o'er his child. Mr. Arthur Moore writes a tale on 'Second Thoughts.' Well, we know all about second thoughts, and Mr. Moore's are no exception to the rule. They seem to have first belonged to some one else, however. Taken any way, Mr. Kenneth Grahame's contribution is the best thing in the number. It is excellently written, it is full of humour, and it ought not to be tested by any xanthopometric standard. As for the verse: M. Hérédia's sonnet has a touch of Leconte de Lisle, and though the title is 'Fleurs de Feu,' the manner of writing is frigid. Mr. William Watson contributes a love song which only Mr. William Watson could have written. Mr. Arthur Symonds versifies his Credo. It will therefore be understood that this is not the Credo which is partly said and partly sung in church. Mr. Theodore Wratisslaw seems once to have dined a young lady, at the St. James's Restaurant and has

come so much under Mrs. Chant's influence that he writes a little ode to say that it was not really such a young lady as young men do dine at the St. James's, but Salome, whose extreme antiquity makes her respectable. It must be very nice for Mr. Wratisslaw that he is able to think so. Mr. John [Davidson] writes a strong and tuneful ballad which we would praise but for its rather maudlin sentimentality. The rest of the verse is not much above and not much below the average verse of the *Yellow Book*.

Sometimes even the best of men, when he knows a good story, tells it. A certain colonel was much given to profane swearing; so much that his general of division reproved him. The next day a bugler blew the wrong order. Immediately the colonel rode up to him intending the sort of reproof he usually gave. But the general was near by, his ears pricked to hear if the colonel would use such words as could never be transferred to this page. But the colonel only remarked, 'Oh, you naughty bugler.' Of course, you will understand that this anecdote has nothing to do with the *Yellow Book*: or we should not have used it.

CHARLES II. IN SCOTLAND IN 1650

Letters and Papers Illustrating the Relations between Charles the Second and Scotland in 1650. Edited, with Notes and Introduction, by SAMUEL RAWSON GARDINER, LL.D. (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society.

Charles II. has fared worse at the hands of historians than most monarchs of the house of Stuart. Few have been found to say a word in his favour. The cynical libertine, ready to sell his own and his country's honour, the pensioner of the hereditary enemy of his country, the Merry Monarch—at the best—who never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one: such is Charles II., even to those who call his father Martyr and Cromwell murderer. In these days of general whitewashing, when Nero has his apologists, Louis XI. is proved the greatest sovereign of France and Richard Crookback one of the wisest and most constitutional of our own, none has arisen yet to paint a new portrait of Charles, hardly any one has ventured to call Macaulay's too highly coloured. Mr. Gardiner, at last, in this volume of the Scottish History Society's publications, has pointed out a flaw in the chain of evidence which, for two hundred years, has been used to prove Charles wholly bad. As the First threw Strafford to the wolves, runs the cant phrase, so the Second Charles deserted his greatest servant in his sorest need. The defeat and execution of Montrose have always been regarded (*vide* Napier) even, nay especially, by Tories as one of the greatest blots on the fame of his master. Charles, it has been constantly said, sent Montrose to Scotland, ready to profit by his success, prepared to make capital out of his defeat.

The true story is somewhat different, and it is clearly to be discovered in this volume. There is no doubt that Charles hoped to unite all parties in Scotland. He had, as Mr. Gardiner points out, no objection to the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland, neither had Montrose. Both were willing to stand by the National Covenant, but neither king nor captain could swallow the Solemn League and Covenant. To Charles this monstrous document was distasteful on many grounds, but the fact that it sought to impose Presbyterianism on England was enough to justify him as a statesman in fighting shy of it. Even if he had believed in it, insistence on its provisions would have been vastly inexpedient, and would inevitably have alienated or at least disheartened the great Cavalier party. Argyll, as ever, was fighting for his own hand. Scotland could not hold the chief of the Campbells and the chief of the Grahams. In consequence Charles's dream of a fusion of Whigs and Tories against the Independents could never be fulfilled. It took him, most naturally, some time to appreciate this fact. When Montrose started on his final expedition Charles was full of hope that all Scotland would rally to the royal standard. By the time Montrose had got to Orkney Charles's eyes were opened, and then he issued an order to Montrose, now discovered for the first time. It is so important, and throws so new a light on all this incident, that it deserves to be quoted at length. Its record is to be found in some notes by Secretary