A XANTHOPHATE

Even the best of men, when he knows a good story, likes to tell it. This is the nice part of this review: it 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 opposition—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 xanthophile or misanthropic editor mercifully diverts his attention from the pink notices on the blue with which his study is peppered, till moron and tropical are, as such, lost in his sight. According to Mr. Jacob Toogood, the holy men in the days of King Noah were afflicted with a multiplying eye as they watched the animals go into the ark by two. No wonder, then, that a mere reviewer should suffer from a most xanthoceleptic xanthopatia. One easily grows tired of the cult of the Yellow Gal who calls from these pages to the Yellow Loy as shallow calleeht unto shallow. But it is not tiresome that makes a man tell a good story when he knows it.

"I've tried all the 'moods and various veins of criticism' upon this chroomo-gamboge xanthology, let us now review it, as the 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 xanthophilic 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 supple. The truth is that Mr. Beardsley seems to picture any person who is not suffering from xanthelaema, which is defined in the medical books as an appearance caused by hyperplasia of sebaceous glands and fatty degeneration of the subcutaneous connective tissue. This extreme xanthelasma is the reason that Mr. Beatley's figures are attenuate: you would expect plumpness, and you would expect them to be slim. Mr. Macbeth's caricature of V. A. W. is also hyper-thrombic: it rather resembles a study in vipers. The tone which accompanies it is not quite clear to the ordinary-intelligence.

But that is because Mr. Beardsley's intelligence is not ordinary. Mr. George Thomson's 'Lithograph' resembles the works of the late Mr. Pettigrew. Mr. Forsdike's 'Pastel' is a monstrous clever caricature of a middle-aged lady with a Bordelian nose. People who are not yellow will like Mr. Beardsley's sketches and Mr. Broughton's head of Mammon, for which may please 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 talent, as Mr. Herbert Crackanthorpe's 'Study in Sentimentality' is a striking illustration of Mr. Herbert Crackanthorpe's peculiar gift. 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 Ellis D'Arcy has done better work than 'When I am King,' though we are both so said to be. Mr. Ernest Dowse knows how he makes 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 Usher. It is strange how the writers will go for the child. Mr. Arthur Moore writes a tale on 'Secret Thoughts.' Well, we know all about secret thoughts, and Mr. Moore's are no exception to the rule. They seem to have first belonged to someone else, however. Taken any way, Mr. Kock's 'Graham's' construction is the best thing in the number. It is excellently written, it is well known, and it ought not to be tested by any xanthocephalic standard. For the verse: M. Herrick's sonnet has a touch of Leconte de Lisle, and though the title is 'Flowers of Dew,' the manner of writing is fragile. Mr. William Watson contributes a love song which, unless Mr. William Watson could have written. Mr. Arthur Symons versifies his Credo. It will reassure the uncomfortable that this is not the Credo which is partly said and partly sung in church. Mr. Theodore Watts-Dawson 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. Watts-Dawson that he is able to think. Mr. John Davidson writes a strong and tuneful ballad which one would prize 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 griefed to proclaim 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 reprovum he usually gave. But the general was near by, his ears pricked to hear if the colonel could utter such words as could never be transferred to this page. But the colonel merely 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


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, Mary and Cromwell murderer. In these days of general shillingwashing, 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 view Strafford to the wolves, runs the cant phrase, so the Second Charles despoited his greatest servant in his forest need. The defeat and execution of Monkston have all been regarded (vide Napier) even, may especially, by Tories as one of the greatest blows on the fame of his master. Charles, it has been constantly said, sent Monkston to Scotland, reply to 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 parities in Scotland. He had, as Mr. Gardiner points out, no objection to the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland, neither had Monkston. 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 dis-}

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Secretary of State for Scotland.