

the space of one or two pages, a clear and interesting account of the plot and incidents of all operas that have made a great success in the past, or that are likely to be again revived. The most important operas are described with greater fullness of detail and comment. Taken altogether the book may claim a position of importance among those relating to this subject, and an index completes its convenience as a book of reference. [J. B. Lippincott Co. \$2.00.]

The Yellow Book.

Here it is, a whole volume of it, Volume XI for October 1896, an illustrated small quarto of 342 pages, taking its sensational name from its flaming yellow cover, and gathering twenty-two chapters on literature and twelve chapters on art from a variety of writers of the new impressionist school. These chapters are for the most part fragments of fiction, but some are critical, and when we say that one of the latter extols D'Annunzio, we have indicated something of the point of view. As for the pictures, that on the cover is one of those hideous parodies on art which the poster world has made so fashionable and notorious. The ornamental title page is better, the plate following is another of the moststrosities that would not elsewhere be tolerated outside of a nursery book of the most primitive description, one is a good portrait of Mr. G. S. Street, another is a rather striking suggestion of a woman's head in profile, another a fine study of horses' heads in action, two others are effective rift views on the coast of Wales and the Isle of Man. *The Yellow Book* caters to an exceptional taste, like olives, or caviare, or some other uncommon dish, with a flavor of its own, and is rather heavily spiced. [John Lane. \$1.50.]

The Century and St. Nicholas.

With the brilliancy and the beauty of new coins of gold dropping from the mint, and with something of the regularity and precision of their appearance, come periodically the bound volumes of the *Century* and *St. Nicholas*, that complete apparatus for satisfying the reading wants of the average household, old and young. Of the *Century* it is the fifty-second volume that now appears, containing the monthly issues from May to October, filling nearly a thousand pages with their rich assemblage of text and engravings, concluding Professor Sloane's monumental *Life of Napoleon*, now beginning to reappear in book form, sketching almost every quarter of the globe in description or with story, handling the passing topics of the time with insight and independence, and meeting a wide variety of tastes with generosity and skill. The same general features characterize the two bound volumes of *St. Nicholas*, covering the year from November, 1895, to October, 1896, with an aggregate of a thousand pages, and over seven hundred pictures, all designed for the entertainment and incidentally the instruction of young folks of every age. And the limit of age runs high in the case of such literature as this, for it would be hard to find the reader in any decade of life who would not find pleasure and refreshment to some degree in turning these richly stored pages, and reviving the emotions and experiences of his own youth again. It is good for old folks to read children's books; to do so helps to keep them young, and *St. Nich-*

olas as well as the *Century* is therefore to be commended to grandparents as well as to grandchildren. [The Century Co.]

Mr. Barrie's Works.

Mr. Barrie's legacy, as he departs to his home on the other side of the sea, is the new and handsome edition of his writings to which we have already referred, and of which six volumes have now appeared, in ample time to institute a serious claim upon the attention of the holiday buyers of the best books. The four volumes now in hand, respectively the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth of this Thistle Edition, as it is called, contain in succession *A Window in Thrums* and *An Edinburgh Eleven*, both in one volume, the incomparable *Little Minister*, its two parts making the next two volumes, and the first part of *Sentimental Tommy*, making the fourth in this enumeration and the sixth in the full set. These books are of generous dimensions, first-class materials, and fine workmanship, and illustrations in photogravure enhance their intrinsic charm. Full of quaint personal interest too are the snatches of preface to each volume. Thus, of the *Window in Thrums*:

I think there are soft-hearted readers here and there who will be glad to know that there never was any Jess. . . . I wrote itself very quickly. I have read that I rewrote it eight times, but it was written once only, nearly every chapter, I think, at a sitting.

So again:

No one could persuade me to add half an inch to the stature of the little minister. . . . You know when the short man is introduced that he is to be a mere foil to a six-footer, that he must love in vain, that at the most the lady will offer to be a sister to him.

And again of *Sentimental Tommy*:

This is not in the smallest degree the book I meant it to be. Tommy ran away with the author.

This Thistle Edition of Barrie is sold only by subscription, and the author wishes it to be understood that it is the only edition of his writings for which he is willing to be held responsible. [Charles Scribner's Sons.]

Yriarte's Venice.

This is neither a large work on Venice nor an ambitious one, but it is in many ways satisfying and helpful, and to one who has visited the city of the lagoons and finds pleasure in the refreshment of memory, or to one who is going and wishes instruction in advance, or to one who does not expect ever to go and must receive his impressions through the eyes and the lips of another, it is alike fitted to be useful and acceptable. The author, Charles Yriarte, is a Frenchman. The translator is F. J. Sitwell. There are about 450 pages of the book, crown octavo, in twenty chapters, with nearly forty excellent photogravures which are clear, accurate, and graphic; and there is thoughtfully that most excellent feature in a book of this kind, but so often lacking, a map of the city folded in at the end, which sets the topography plainly before the reader and will help him to understand the intricate system of the canals and their relations to the intermediate spaces, and to the buildings and points of greater interest, better than pages of description could possibly do. This map is printed in colors and is as good as Baedeker's best. A ribbon marker and a handsome but not ob-

trusive binding complete the outfit. In plan and method the work is historical and critical rather than descriptive; that is to say descriptive in the guidebook way. In this respect it is subordinate to graver elements of interest, and not until the last three chapters is the reader actually taken into the city on the personally conducted plan. It is the Venice of the past in her glory, the glory of her arts and sciences, in the turmoil of her politics and conflicts, in the splendor of her public services, in the beauty of her antiquities, that is first and chiefly held up for study; and it is only after this silent and elevated intercourse with yesterday that we are let down into the inferiority of today. Not but that Venice has today much—O so much—to delight and detain the visitor; next to Constantinople and London it is the most fascinating city of the Old World, and separates itself as widely from the upstarts of the century in this land of ours as the East is from the West, as the tenth century is from the twentieth. To see Paris and die, is the pious wish of some Americans of the hour. To see Venice and dream away the days in the gondola, is a wish to a better purpose. Read Yriarte and you will understand why. [Henry T. Coates & Co.]

The Masterpieces of Michaelangelo and Milton.

It requires but little thought to recognize and appreciate the force and fitness with which Mr. Alexander S. Twombly has brought together his companion studies of the great Italian painter and the great English poet, each as a sort of companion, illustrator, and interpreter of the other, into a single volume with half-tone pictures. It may well be accorded an honorable place among the minor holiday publications of the present season. In genius, points out the author, the two men are akin:

Milton wrote his epic in verses that will never die; Michaelangelo wrought out his immortal works. Both deal in colossal figures, and in grandeur of conception they are one. . . . Both have interpreted the deeper things of God. They fittingly belong together, although differing in attributes, and the Sistine creations of the painter may well illustrate, as they do in this book, the masterful inspirations of the writer of *Paradise Lost*.

The book, which is not a large one, is in two parts. The first, in five chapters, studies the painter and his major works, but chiefly the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican at Rome. The second, in four chapters, is devoted to the poet, to his conceptions of natural and supernatural beings, and to *Paradise Lost*. The pictures, including portraits of both men, are otherwise copies of the painter's works, and reproduce them well. The essay is a thoughtful and suggestive one, and will interest any reader whose tastes incline to the finer lines of poetry and art, and in whom the religious sentiment is strong. As a book, it is simply but prettily made and bound, and has a well-bred air. [Silver, Burdett & Co.]

Tales of Languedoc.

This is in all respects a creditable book to the San Francisco publisher whose imprint it bears. Its author, Mr. Samuel Jacques Brun of Leland Stanford Jr. University, is to the manner born, the tales which he has written out in these pages being an inheritance en-