Church” at Otteringham, “Clipping the Church” at Bradford-on-Avon can be paralleled by equally strange customs in some of the other places.

Into the chapters on Marriage and Funeral Customs, on Holy Days and Seasons, a great deal of research has been put, and, though that on Church Music has recently been the subject of more thorough examination, it contains snatches of old forgotten carols one is glad to be reminded of. The Cornish one ending thus is little heard now:—

“Twelve were the twelve Apostles; Eleven are they that have gone to Heaven; Ten are the Ten Commandments,”

and so on till

“Four were the gospel preachers; Three of them were strangers; Two of them were lily-white babes; Dressed all in green, O; One of them was all alone, And ever shall remain so.”

It is a pity Mr. Vaux should not have forgotten, for the moment, everything that he was an antiquarian, and that an antiquarian should regard nothing old as alien to his mood. He is a little too fond of dubbing customs he does not agree with “objectible” and “abominable.” But his opinions have not spoiled the way of his compiling a very interesting book, which will be welcomed beyond the circle of the churchmen for whom he intended it.

ADRIATICA. By Percy Pinkerton. 5s. net. (Garg & Bird.)

Mr. Percy Pinkerton does not know the difference between his good and bad moments, and he wants humour. He has written very pretty verses—their prettiness cannot be denied—called “To Corinna”—the address of a lover, who follows death, to his lady. It is altogether in the wrong tone, for, save for a vague mention of her “sweet name,” the lady is indistinguishable in it, while the lover plays a gorgeous part. He is to “look forth from Hesperus, white in the lurid west,” and “lean with the lilies odorous in twilight by the breast.” Likewise he is to be “apparelled in the morning sky,” and “masked in the myrtle’s green.” This is all very doubtful, but his vision of his admirable self at the end hits the truth. He is to glide “At intervals supreme / Like moonlight through your dream, / Tranquil, elusive, satisfied.”

Of course, such a lover would be “satisfied.” There are pleasant pictures of Venice in the book, and lines here and there suggest his near Mr. Pinkerton comes to writing passages lyrical. But the thought is not good enough in quality. A poem of the late Mr. J. A. Symonds, in response to one from Mr. Pinkerton, is included in “Adriatina,” but it does not materially raise the level of the collection.

SHYLOCK AND OTHERS. Eight studies. By G. H. Radford. (T. Fisher Unwin.)

These are essays of a lover of good literature and a thoughtful man. But, as if apologising to the many who do not very much care for his most serious interests, he puts on a jaunty air and cuts jokes by way of making his con- versation palatable. Modesty in the guise of flippancy is not an unfrequent sight, and is preferable, of course, to stolid solemnity, but it is not the only possible alternative. His jokes are not so good as his serious criticism. The sketch of the career of Shylock had he lived to day, for example, “baptised a distinguished ecclesiastic who knows there is Eternal Hope for Jews, if not for publishers, to a Dowager Countess interested in the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews,” and so on, seems rather churlish. The main object of the essay is to say, “But Robin Hood,” “Hamlet’s Madness,” and “Socrates on Politics” are very readable, and leave us with an impression of talking with one who loves common sense and very cordially detests cant and long-windedness both in literature and life.

DRAMATIC PICTURES. By Alexander H. Japp. 5s. (Chatto and Windus.)

The best part of Dr. Japp’s verse is not poetry. It is sometimes the quick observation of nature; sometimes it is the keen interest in human beings; sometimes it is self-revelation of an amiably garrulous order. These, by some fatality, are never transmuted into poetry. His poetic vein is hardly fictitious enough, and hardly forcible enough. Yet read his “Rispetti,” on Songs of the Birds, and his translations from Petrarch, and you will see that he has much to say that suggests beauty, if what he says be not beauty itself.

THE POEMS OF RICHARD D’ALTON WILLIAMS. (Duffy.)

Williams was “Shamrock” of the Nation, and one of the most notable of the “Young Ireland” reformers and singers. A sufferer in the troublous times of the later “forties”—he was tried for treason felony on account of articles contributed to the Irish Tribune, but discharged—and keenly alive to the miseries of his country and the hopelessness of serving it actively at that moment, he left Ireland in 1851 for America, where he lived and practised as a doctor till his death in 1862. A man of great public spirit, devotion and charity, his is one of the most attractive personalities of the “Young Ireland” epoch. His verses had spirit and vigour, and they served their purpose in their day: To rescue them from the grave is a work of piety, and is the foundation of science. There is no work of piety in America where he has a more lasting influence than in that of the Irish Americans.

THE YELLOW BOOK. An Illustrated Quarterly. Vol. II.

(Mathers and Lane.)

That the Yellow Book does not mean to represent any special school is the promising feature revealed by the second volume. It still has its weak points, the most evident being the quality of the general articles, always excepting Mr. Greenwood’s amiable and charming “Gospel of Contest”—the thin streak of story in it hardly permitting its classification with the fiction. Mr. Greenwood is not in eager sympathy with all the tendencies of the age, but that does not make him gloomy and morose. His dream of a time when many present evils will be cured by a cheerful delight in simple living, is presented with a lively faith in the possibility of its realisation. Next in interest, first in artistic excellence, is Mr. Henry James’s story, “The Coxon Fund,”—subtle, fine spun, exquisite in parts. It is just a little fatiguing, all the same, to follow its nervous attempt to get at the absolute truth about a man who was to the believing vulgar a great inspiration and to the unbelieving vulgar a huge fraud. It represents conscientiousness and intellectual interest striving passionately for the precision and impartiality of science. Mr. H. Rider Haggard’s “A Child of the ’80’s”—a clever study of a character between a perfectly realised duty and a flippant perversity of the will—is in the same temper. Of the poems, Mr. Alfred Hayes’ “My Study,” is the most sympathetic. It is proof enough of his right—and long may it be his right!—to say, “A soul unhardened is the book / Wherein I write.”

CHILDREN’S SINGING GAMES. Collected and Edited by Alice B. Gomme. 3s. 6d. (Nutt.)

Mrs. Gomme, after pouring out much learning on this subject in the Dictionary of Folk-Lore, has had the happy thought of making a children’s play-book out of some of the most picturesque of her material. She has been admirably helped by Miss Winifred Smith, the illustrator, whose designs in black and white are pretty, and effective. Mrs. Gomme throws a sop to the elders in the shape of a preface and a few notes, but the songs and the tunes and the pictures are for children, and a prettier book has not been made for them for many a day. They are promised another at Christmas time. Yet, by-the-bye, Mrs. Gomme is among the latter-day cynics. In a version of one of the songs, a line, given only in the notes, runs, “When my husband died, how happy was I!” The commentator thinks this a proof that “the game has not stopped its growth, but represents present-day feeling.”

SONGS FROM DREAMLAND. By May Kendall. (Longmans.)

Miss May Kendall’s verse is genuine. We are conscious of giving rare praise. It knows the height it can sincerely